

# Jonathan Sears Ford

B. 1831

SCS #1037

Le gach beannachd,  
Norman MacLeod.

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Dugald Buchanan



# BUCHANAN, THE SACRED BARD

OF THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

HIS CONFESSIONS and  
HIS SPIRITUAL SONGS

Rendered into English Verse

With his Letters and a Sketch of his Life

By LACHLAN MACBEAN

Author of

"Songs and Hymns of the Scottish Gael,"

"Pet Marjorie," &c., &c.

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### **CORRIGENDA.**

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Page 19, line 13, read 1751.

Page 41, verse 3, line 4, read—to it.

Page 78, last line, comma after “ Word.”

Page 129, line 20—Columban.



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## PREFACE

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THE public has had to wait long for a complete edition in English of the works of Buchanan, the sacred bard of the Scottish Highlands.

Of his Spiritual Songs, certain passages and even entire poems have appeared, and a few years ago a complete translation into English prose was published by the Rev. A. Sinclair. In 1885 the present writer rendered the whole of these beautiful works into English verse, but that book has been long out of print. It is therefore felt that a new issue of the poems in English verse is now overdue. Accordingly the translations have been revised and in some cases recast for this volume. Each poem has been supplied with a brief introduction and supplemented by notes on certain words in the original text, and the collection is prefaced by a chapter on the metrical forms that Buchanan employed.

Buchanan's Diary, so-called, here entitled his Confessions, was among the papers he left at his death in 1768. It was published in 1836, and in 1853 it was reproduced in a work on "Man's Twofold State." But for many years it has been inaccessible to ordinary English readers, although a Gaelic translation has been

available, at least since 1844. The original edition has been carefully edited for this book, and some passages have been omitted in order to increase the effectiveness of the story. At the same time, the periods covered by the different sections of the narrative have been more distinctly indicated.

Along with the Poems and the Confessions, two important letters by Buchanan are given in an appendix. One of these is here printed for the first time.

In the books enumerated in the Bibliography several interesting details regarding Buchanan are given, but it has been thought well to provide now a more definite account of his life as a whole, to accompany this complete edition of his remarkable works.

October, 1919.

# Life of Dugald Buchanan

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WHEN the wide world comes to know DUGALD BUCHANAN it will never forget him. There is an attractiveness in the picturesque setting of his life, in the frank seriousness of his Poems, and in the intimate naïveté of his Confessions. There is also a surprise in finding concealed in a Highland clansman a conscience-driven Puritan, and in seeing themes of Miltonic grandeur set forth by a great bard, in the language of Ossian. There is, moreover, fruitful matter for thought in watching, under the microscope of a careful personal diary, the nervous progress of a lonely Celtic pilgrim on the Mystic Way. Above all there is a real satisfaction in discovering how a deep, strange, often overshadowed inner life may eventually emerge into the sunlight of a strong practical usefulness.

The scenes of his infancy did not lack romance. He was born in 1716 in the mountainous district of Balquhiddy, in Western Perthshire. His father's tribe—the Buchanans—owned at one time lands by the side of Loch

Lomond in Stirlingshire, and neighbouring glens in Perthshire, and being a warlike race, they took part in the historic struggles of Scotland against the Danes and the English. One of the best known bearers of the name was George Buchanan, the great Latinist of the 16th century—historian, Principal of St. Leonard's College in St. Andrews, and educator of James VI. of Scotland and I. of England.

In the days of Dugald's youth the Scottish Highlands were disturbed by Jacobite plots. Around his birthplace dwelt the proud and rather turbulent Clan MacGregor whose ancient name was long proscribed by law. In the very year before his birth the rebellion of 1715 had seen Rob Roy and his caterans swarming through Balquhiddar, and for thirty years more the glens were seething with political disaffection.

But Dugald's father, John Buchanan, was no outlaw. He tilled his little farm and attended to his little corn mill at Ardoch, near the banks of the sluggish Balvaig, almost opposite the spot where now stands the railway station of Strathyre. The miller was a quiet, God-fearing man, and he considered it his duty to give his son a sound education and a religious upbringing. But the greatest influence in the boy's life was that of his mother, Janet

Ferguson. The six short years that he enjoyed her care sufficed to imbue his nascent mind with a sense of the awful import of life, of the reality of the spiritual world and of the claims of the Narrow Way. Then he lost her in his childhood, but for half a century her power over him never waned.

After her death he was sent to a school established in the district by the Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, and conducted by a capable teacher named Nicol Ferguson. Being a lad of mental gifts much above the average, Dugald did so well that at the early age of twelve years he was appointed tutor in a well-to-do family. In this new home also the mother was a pious woman, but unfortunately she lacked force of character. She had so little influence that her children were openly profane and rude. Easily impressed by his surroundings, young Dugald soon took on the manners of his new companions, but not without inward struggle. The memory of his mother's counsels and prayers was still fresh within him, and it was soon reinforced from another quarter. The house in which he found himself was well stocked with books, and he became acquainted with the English classics. Their influence on his mind and character was strong and lasting; in particular, as one may well divine,

the influence of Shakespeare and Milton and Young's Night Thoughts.

The lad remained in this family only for a few months, and was then sent to complete his education at Stirling. Here he studied for two years and afterwards at Edinburgh for six months, his father being evidently ambitious, as many a Scottish father in days of old was ambitious, that his boy should not be kept down by the fact that fair science frowned upon his humble birth. But the Highland youth was quickly entangled in the snares of the city. He got into a wild set, and graduated only too swiftly in the school of vice. The opportunity so dearly bought for him by his father out of his hard-won earnings from mill and croft was thrown away, and in less than six months the lad, now aged eighteen years, was ordered home and sternly directed to choose a trade by which he might gain a living. The irresponsible days of youth were over.

Dugald was naturally very averse to the change, but in the end he obeyed, and chose the trade of a house carpenter. He was therefore apprenticed with a friend in the neighbouring district of Kippen, where he worked for two years. Thereafter he removed to the town of Dumbarton, on the river Clyde, and there laboured at the same trade. For a few years he moved freely through the surrounding districts as his work demanded, and

thus found many opportunities of adding to his stores of general knowledge.

It was in those years that his thoughts were drawn more and more to the religious life, and his chief pursuit became the attainment of spiritual equilibrium, or as it appeared to him, of a right relationship with God.

He frequented many a parish church, sought the aid of many a preacher, took long journeys to be present at the celebration of the Lord's Supper at many a moorland communion, and seemed to be pressing on to take heaven by storm.

In one of these pilgrimages to the shrines of religious truth, Buchanan came under the influence of George Whitefield. This was during Whitefield's second visit to Scotland in the summer of 1742, when he was drawing audiences of over 30,000 persons in the district of Cambuslang, near Glasgow. Buchanan was very deeply impressed by the fervour of the great English preacher and became more eager than ever in his search for spiritual light and peace.

So absorbed did he become in this great quest that after he had entered on his twenty-fifth year he began to write down in a private book its successive episodes. This is the manuscript which is reproduced in the present volume

under the title of his Confessions. Possibly, nay probably, he never intended it to meet any human eye except his own. His sole object was to have before him in black and white a plain statement of the facts so that he might weigh them aright. It was written in English, and having been found among Buchanan's papers, was preserved by his widow.

Long after her death, and after his poems had made his name famous, this English record was published in its entirety by an Edinburgh printer. The extracts here reproduced give a full and fair idea of the whole record. It will be compared with those other revelations of personal spiritual history—the Confessions of St Augustine and the Journals of Amiel. With them it shares the quality of an intense realisation of the spiritual realm. This realisation the Twentieth Century, otherwise so richly endowed, has to a large extent lost, and with it something of the dignity and the value of human life.

The record is sometimes called Buchanan's Diary, but it will be seen that it has none of the features of a diary. For the year 1741, when Buchanan was about twenty-five years old, it contains two entries, three for 1742, four for 1743, and the remainder may well have been written in or about 1750. It is likely that Buchanan did not intend to carry his record past the entry for August 1744—



that critical period of his experience when, in his twenty-seventh year, he made full surrender to the Divine Love and accepted peace.

In this happy consummation the development of a rich inner life might be supposed to have found fit completion. But the event turned out far otherwise. The story of this man's conversion had a strange sequel.

He evidently expected that the new light now illumining his path would go on shining more and more unto the perfect day. But in less than three years it suffered eclipse under every circumstance of tragedy. The Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-46 came near to ruin the soul of Dugald Buchanan.

As an earnest searcher for spiritual truth at every shrine—church services, religious meetings, and great sacramental gatherings, he had already drawn to himself the attentions of the young Highlanders around him—nearly all Jacobites—and the scoffing remark was occasionally heard—There goes the Whig! The insurrectionary movement of the '45 spread like wildfire through Balquhiddar, and the men of the moors and scattered hamlets donned belt and claymore, and marched away over the hills to follow Prince Charlie. But Dugald Buchanan would have nothing to do with the Rising. He was out of sympathy with the majority of his clan. Their ideal was the

unfortunate Prince; his was already taking on the massive proportions of the Christian Hero, afterwards portrayed in his poem.

News came of victory after victory, and of a triumphant march into England, but he did not share in the elation of the hour. Then came rumours of the retreat from Derby, the capture of the Highland contingent left in Carlisle to delay the pursuing army, a last flicker of victory at Falkirk, and finally the black disaster of Culloden.

Following the news of this awful debacle there arrived many tales of ruthless cruelties perpetrated against the brave and foolish followers of the Prince, tales that aroused the anger of their kinsmen, even of those who were Whigs.

In October 1746 the captives of Carlisle were tried as common criminals, found guilty, and made to suffer an ignominious death. Among them were many of Dugald Buchanan's own kith and kin, and of his neighbours. Their deaths brought him great grief, and along with the natural sorrow for their fate came resentment against the hideous cruelty displayed by many of the victorious party—the inhuman torturing and slaying of the simple Highland peasantry, both the innocent and the guilty. In particular Francis Buchanan, of Arnprior, was arrested in his own house of

Leny, in that very district, and in spite of his vehement denials of being implicated in the rebellion, he was hurried off to Carlisle and Penrith for trial. He was accused of holding the rank of Major in the Duke of Perth's Yeomanry, and the charge was supported by suborned evidence, with the result that the accused man was convicted and hanged.

Buchanan's whole nature revolted against such glaring wrongs, and his outraged feelings passed irresistibly into fierce anger and vengeful desires. Now at last the old Pagan clansman in his heart was aroused; the Whig-Puritan was swept away by the rushing flood of his wrath, and for a time he had room for nothing but dark thoughts of revenge.

Amid this wild moral upheaval Buchanan's peace of mind, so recently won after years of struggle, seemed to be utterly lost. His very soul was tossed on stormy waters and well-nigh suffered shipwreck.

Only those who find the moral and the spiritual intensely real can at all understand the living tragedy here revealed. A less earnest man would have felt the dilemma less keenly. But this Highland carpenter with the genius of a great poet was simple and direct in his faith, and believing himself a child of eternity, he found awful meanings in his conflict. On the one side were

ranged the forces of the new, strong Christian life and on the other the elemental emotions of justice outraged and kinship betrayed. The storm of wrath and suffering is vividly described in the Confessions, but they also show how in Buchanan's heart the grace of forgiveness was finally victorious. Remembrance of all that God had borne and pardoned of his former misdeeds let loose a flood of gratitude in which his hot resentment was at length fully quenched.

It was just at this period of spiritual stress that young Buchanan felt the stirrings of another new emotion. He was drawn by bonds of warm affection to a gentle and loveable damsel named Margaret Brisbane, daughter of the land steward of the Earl of Loudon, at the picturesque hamlet of Lawers, near Crieff. They were married in 1749, and settled down on the old family farm of Ardoch, the bridegroom being about 33 years old.

But a well-meaning and gifted young man like Buchanan was sure to hear sooner or later a call for social service. After the rebellion there was felt in the glens a new hunger for knowledge, and he began to conduct educational classes far and near, at the Braes of Balquhiddy, at Strathyre, and Lochearnside. In those mountain journeys he was drawing in from wild scenery and from isolated human lives inspiration for future poems—the imagery

of his poems on Winter, on the Day of Judgment, and The Dream.

This went on for two years, and then Buchanan, now 35 years old, was placed in charge of a school at Kinloch Rannoch, situated in a beautiful district at the head of a lake in Western Perthshire, about thirty miles north from his native Balquhider. The appointment was made by the Barons of Exchequer as managers of the estate of Struan, confiscated for treason. To this northern district Buchanan removed early in 1757, and immediately plunged into his urgent and laborious but congenial task. That the district had few social, religious or educational attractions may be learned from the factor's report included in the Strowan Estates MSS. for that very period:—"The situation of Rannoch rendered it very fit for carrying on the business of thieving, as it lyes in the centre of the Highlands," whither resort "Macdonalds and Camerons, but not for building kirks."

As a teacher of the young, Buchanan won great success. It is true that his classes were ill-equipped with school books, but that want merely supplied an opportunity for new methods of oral instruction, while the general ignorance of the English tongue on the part of the children gave him an opportunity to devise a sound method of bilingual education. Hav-

ing a good literary knowledge of Gaelic, he was able to train his pupils in translating, readily and correctly, from the one language to the other, and in order that the knowledge should be thorough, he got them to name all objects around them first in Gaelic and then in English, the exact pronunciation being given in every case. In this way useful vocabularies of the two languages were compiled with great care, and supplemented by short sentences formed upon these words. Reading and writing in both tongues were thus taught side by side. The Rev. John Sinclair, who has made minute enquiries into this matter, states that in Buchanan's classes even arithmetic was first taught orally and on the bilingual system, and as there was at the time no translation of the Bible in Scottish Gaelic the children were required to translate long passages into that language. It is also narrated that though a strict disciplinarian, Buchanan possessed a personal charm that made him greatly beloved among the young.

Until the Rev. Donald Maclean unearthed from the Strowan manuscripts interesting contemporary tributes to Buchanan's work and placed them at our disposal for this book, even the Gaelic-speaking admirers of Buchanan's poetry were not aware of the practical services he had rendered to education and social advancement. In that wide important district

there was in 1749 only one school with 24 scholars. Buchanan entered on his work in 1751, and by 1753 there were 6 schools with 350 scholars. Nor was the advance in manners and morals less marked—"many formerly noted for dishonesty and licentiousness" now becoming "sober, honest, and industrious." Later in 1758, Ensign Small, who was now factor, reported "a very considerable alteration for the better in the country of Rannoch within these few years, and that the unwearied diligence and application of Dugald Buchanan have not a little contributed to that end." He added that Buchanan was "a master of the Irish language," and every Sunday addressed above 500 people.

In a petition addressed by Buchanan to the Commissioners on Forfeited Estates, craving for improvements on his school, he wrote:—"In spring, summer, and harvest the people of Bunrannoch, and for two miles up the sides of Loch Rannoch, convene to worship God and are catechized by the Petitioner in the fields, but there is no house proper for, or that can contain the people who convene in winter to worship, which hinders many from attending, and endangers the health of those who do." (MS. Strowan papers.)

Reporting in 1753, the factor wrote:—"Dugald Buchanan, who I found after a year

and a half's tryal of such singular service in the country that, sensible of what a blessing he had been, and would likely prove to be, in that part of the country, I granted him my personal obligation for the payment of £20 stg. for ten years."

At first Buchanan's little school was not at the village of Kinloch Rannoch but at Drum-castle, which is a mile further east. Here, according to Sinclair, he resided and taught for thirteen years and afterwards for four years in Kinloch Rannoch.

Buchanan was now being led into wider and wider fields of usefulness. He first began to conduct religious services on Sundays in his little schoolhouse. But the attendance increased so much that the meetings had to be conducted in the open air. Then, in 1755, he was recommended by the Church of Scotland Presbytery of Dunkeld to the Committee of the Royal Bounty as a suitable man to be Catechist—a lay religious teacher—for the wide surrounding district. He accepted this additional appointment, and made frequent tours through the neighbouring glens, teaching and preaching in his native Gaelic, of which he had so complete a mastery. His influence as a religious teacher became great in all that region, and it is said that on one occasion two clans who were at deadly feud assembled to



hear him preach, and that as he spoke he stood on a great stone in the centre of a stream which separated the rival parties!

This was the river Gaur, and the parties separated by that unbridged water were the tenants of an estate under a native ownership and those living on one of the estates confiscated by the Government on account of the late rebellion. According to a recent narrator, the Rev John Sinclair, Buchanan "preached so lovingly and so powerfully to those on each side of the river that the people, quite overcome with emotion, are said to have rushed into the stream, and to have embraced one another; and from that day forward a 'truce of God' has existed between the two peoples."

In the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1761, Dr Hyndman reported that "the country of Rannoch from being possessed by the most lawless and thievish people, is now becoming greatly civilised, and no thefts or robberies are heard of among the inhabitants, 2000 in number." (MS. report copied by Rev. D. Maclean.)

Buchanan's intellectual powers were now maturing and the variety of his past experiences stored in a retentive memory, combined with a contemplative habit of mind, created in him a poetic philosophy of no ordinary power. There are indications that before he attained

his thirtieth year he had felt the attractions of the gentle art of poetry, and the stirring events of the Rebellion naturally induced many new emotions and new trains of thought. Always a keen and loving observer of nature, he was no less an interested student of humanity, and it is matter for regret that so few of his religious poems and none at all of his compositions on secular subjects have been preserved.

As years went on the unusual stature of the man began to be recognised. For one thing he was a gifted and intelligent student of Gaelic, and for this reason he was chosen by the Rev. James Stewart of Killin to assist him in the preparation of the first edition of the New Testament in that tongue. In 1767 Buchanan therefore went to reside for some months in Edinburgh, revising the proofs of this undertaking, and at the same time, ever eager for knowledge, he attended the University classes for natural philosophy, astronomy, and anatomy. During his residence in the city, he met several well-known authors, and, among others, David Hume, the philosopher and historian.

His countrymen residing in the city, having heard that he was in their midst, induced Buchanan to conduct for their benefit religious services every Sunday in their native tongue. They went further, and set on foot a movement

to have him ordained as a clergyman of the Church of Scotland, and although it was found that this could not then be arranged, his ministrations were continued and were very highly valued.

He also took the opportunity to publish a few of his own Gaelic poems. This was towards the end of 1767. A few months thereafter, or in the early summer of 1768, he was recalled to Kinloch Rannoch by the news that his family had been stricken down by an epidemic of fever which prevailed in the district. He went home, and while helping to nurse them he also caught the infection, and died at the early age of fifty-two.

It is gratifying to find that Buchanan's remarkable powers and his sterling qualities were appreciated by the simple folk in the Highland glens around him. By his neighbours throughout Rannoch he was greatly beloved, and when his death became known it was resolved to give him honourable burial in their midst. But the people of his native Balquhiddy were equally resolved that the body should be brought home to his birth-place. Accordingly a band of resolute men set out on the northward march to Rannoch, and on their arrival there it looked as if there might be a fiercer feud for the possession of his body than any he had pacified in his life-

time. Fortunately peaceful counsels prevailed. The men of Rannoch stood gloomily but reverently aside, and the coffin containing the body was borne away through the mountains and interred in the small Buchanan cemetery at Little Leny in Balquhiddier.

His widow, with her two sons and two daughters, returned to the family farm at Ardoch, where she lived until her death in 1824. One of the daughters was still alive when Buchanan's diary was printed in 1836.

In physical appearance Buchanan was tall, blackhaired, dark-complexioned, and large-eyed. In his younger days he wore the Highland costume, but after 1745 he had, like the rest of his countrymen, to discard the kilt. During his residence in Rannoch, his usual attire consisted of knee-breeches, a blue coat, and a broad Highland bonnet.

The greatness of Buchanan as a sacred bard has long been appreciated by his Gaelic-speaking countrymen, and his works, now submitted in full to the attention of the English-speaking public, have been a persistent native force in the formation of the Highland character. Dr Duff, the famous missionary to India, acknowledged more than once his spiritual indebtedness to Buchanan. Writing late in life he said—"As a youth I remember hearing large portions of his two most celebrated poems,

‘The Skull’ and ‘The Day of Judgment,’ often read and repeated by good people in the parish of Moulin. Some of the sentiments and even expressions have even now stuck to my memory.”

Rev. D. Maclean, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland for 1919, writes:—“Assembled townships in Sutherlandshire listened unwearied to the recitations from this and other favourite poets through the long nights of their dreary winters and carried with them into their life of sorrow and need their spirit and sentiment. The lonely shepherd on his mountain round, and the sinewy fisherman bending to his oar, made them the companions of their toil. Over the great oceans expatriated Highlanders carried them to semi-scorched Australia and forest-clad Nova Scotia, and there they served as their mentors when pest and fire, frost and want, gave the providence of God the appearance of fatherly forgetfulness.”

Among the great poets of the Scottish Gael three are acknowledged to be of outstanding ability — Alexander Macdonald, 1700-1770; Dugald Buchanan, 1716-1768, and Duncan Macintyre, 1724-1812, and it is interesting to note that these three were contemporaries. It would almost seem that at this time (as happened in Athens in the days of Aeschylus,

Euripides, and Sophocles), the poetic genius of the race attained its full growth and flowered in these three notable men. Of the three, Buchanan alone chose for his special sphere of work the sublime themes of the spiritual realm, and well he was equipped for the task.

The life of Dugald Buchanan covered an epoch of transition in the Scottish Highlands. The country passed from the traditional period of arms, romance and sentiment, to the modern period of partial education, commonplace work and ordinary respectability. The character and outlook of the people underwent a change, and the new age brought its own difficulties and disadvantages. Certainly it provided new problems for Buchanan, and perhaps the most real service he rendered to his fellows was that, by his teaching and his poems, he helped to create for the new era a better religious and social atmosphere.

We have seen how the man was gradually prepared for his work, and now looking back upon his activities one cannot avoid noting in them two rather remarkable features. One is that, although Buchanan was in temperament a typical Celt, and a great Gaelic bard, he made his countrymen familiar with that form of piety which prevailed in England in the seventeenth century, and which from his day prevailed for more than a hundred years

throughout his native glens. The other feature is that, though he was a Celt, Buchanan's religion was singularly free from mysticism or psychical elements of any kind. Among devout Highland ministers of old, visions, predictions, and other revelations of another order of existence have been not infrequent, just as other outward manifestations have been known in Welsh revivals, and still others among English pietists of a certain fervour like George Fox and John Wesley. But in Dugald Buchanan, with all his intensity, there is no indication of anything of this kind, except of course his dreams, which were the reflection of his waking thoughts. In his dramatic dealings with God in "The Cave of the Rock," and in his pictures of employments in the future life, revealed in the appendix to this volume, Buchanan came near the borders of the supernormal, but no further. His religion was as purely inward and spiritual in essence as it was thoroughly practical in its effects.

Buchanan did a great work for his people, but he was greater than his work. His personality was complex and its development followed remarkable lines, revealing qualities singularly appropriate for the work he was destined to do, and suggesting the presence of others of still larger scope. His transparent sincerity and tremendous earnestness, along

with a certain greatness of heart, endeared him to his own people, and it may be hoped that men of other races, reared amid very different surroundings, will find him worthy of serious study.



# The Spiritual Songs



# The Spiritual Songs

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## Introduction

The first edition of these sacred poems was published under Buchanan's own supervision in 1767, the year before that in which he died. The little book bore the title—"Laoidhe Spioradail, le Dùghall Bochannan," and on the title page he got printed the words—"Gabhadh focal Chrìosd comhnuidh annaibh gu saidbhir san uile ghliocas; a' teagasg agus a' comhairleachadh a' cheile le salmaibh, agus laoidhibh, agus cantaicibh spioradail, a' deanamh ciuil do'n Tighearna le gràs ann bhur croidheachaibh. Col. iii., 16," and the imprint—"Duinedin; clodh bhuailt le Balfour, Auld agus Smellie. M,DCC,LXVII."

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and exhorting each other with psalms, lays and spiritual canticles, making melody to the Lord with grace in your hearts." The printers were Balfour, Auld, & Smellie.

The title is generally Englished "Spiritual Songs." Buchanan's Gaelic title, *Laoidhe Spioradail*, he connects with St Paul's phrases

“Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” (odais pneumatikais). Although many of them are long, far too long to be used as hymns in either public or private devotions, it is plain that Buchanan intended them to be sung. The task of composing some of them was suggested by hearing soldiers singing the sacred lyrics of a northern poet named John Mackay, and Buchanan simply meant to provide a wider selection for devotional use. The Spiritual Songs have been sung by generations of Highlanders, some of them to special melodies of their own.

As mentioned above, the eight songs were prepared for the press and published by Buchanan himself. Only two or three copies of this edition are known to be in existence. These poems have always been highly valued by his countrymen, who rank Buchanan with Macdonald and M‘Intyre as one of the three great poets of Gaeldom. A comparison of his powers with these two great contemporaries would be easier if his poems on secular themes had been preserved, but he appears to have destroyed them before his death. Probably he deemed worldly themes unworthy of the poet’s pen or of the study of mortal men hurrying through a transient world to a world eternal. Accordingly we have only these few religious compositions by which to judge his muse. But at least he

has the distinction of having voiced not unworthily in a new language great Christian speculations, presenting to his race broad religious conceptions touched with a glowing imagination, and didactic poetry instinct with natural grace.

Buchanan arranged his collection not as they would be likely to appeal to the interest of the reader but in theological order, the poem on the greatness or majesty of God being placed first, that on the sufferings and death of Christ second, the long poem on the Day of Judgment third, followed by the Dream, the picture of the Christian Hero, the striking thoughts on the Skull and the descriptive stanzas on Winter, concluding with the author's Prayer.

The vocabulary of the poems is strongly marked by words derived from Latin, or that have Latin affinities. Of the former class, good examples are *iomhaigh*, *imago*; *creid*, *credo*; *miorbhuil*, *mirabilis*; *sgrùd*, *scruto*; *umhal*, *humilis*, and ecclesiastical terms such as *sagairt*, *sacerdos*; *leabhar*, *liber*; *gloir*, *gloria*; *beannachd*, *benedictus*, and many others brought into Gaelic by the Christian Church. Of the other class are such words as *solus*, *light* (*sol*); *luaidh*, *praise* (*laus*); *leth*, *side* (*latus*); *clao*, *fall* (*clino*); *talamh*, *earth* (*tellus*); *feart*, *virtue* (*virtus*); *righ*, *king* (*rex*), and others

belonging to the common heritage of the Indo-European family.

The classical edition of the originals of Buchanan's Spiritual Songs is that published by the Rev. Donald Maclean (Edinburgh: John Grant), with notes on syntax, grammar, and derivations.

In the present work there is a brief explanatory introduction to each poem, and at the end of each poem a few notes on the more striking expressions. Very full etymological notes will be found in Mr Maclean's book.

Of the eight compositions, five (the 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 8th) are in Iambic measure—simple quatrains of octosyllabic lines, the accent falling as follows:—

xa xa xa xa

As in all Gaelic poetry, the rhyme is a vocalic assonance, the consonants being little regarded, and as in similar quatrains in English verse, the end of the 2nd line rhymes with the end of the 4th. But the Gaelic verse has also an internal assonance, the end of the first line finding an echo in a stressed syllable in the second line; and so with the 3rd and 4th. Thus—

O ciod e Dia, no ciod e *ainm*?  
 Cha' tuig na h-*aingle* 's àird' an *gloir*;  
 E'n solus dealrach folaicht *uath*'  
 Far nach ruig sùil no smuain 'na *choir*.

In the English translations the measure of the Gaelic has been followed, but no attempt has been made to imitate the Gaelic rhymes. In the 1st, 3rd, and 6th poems the third line rhymes with the first and the fourth with the second, but in the 5th poem the second rhymes with the first and the fourth with the third, and in the 8th poem the fourth line rhymes with the first. In this way a little variety is obtained equivalent to the freedom shown by the original in occasionally changing the position of the internal rhyme.

The fourth poem, the Sufferings of Christ, is in an irregular measure, a line of 8 syllables being followed by one of 6 syllables, the accents usually falling as follows:—

xa xa xa xx  
xa xa xa

The end of the first line is thus a dactyl, but when, as often happens, the last syllable of the first line is accented, the measure becomes an ordinary Iambus of four and three feet alternately.

The seventh poem, The Skull, is an Anapaest, 2 short lines of 6 syllables each being followed by a longer one of 8. The form is as follows:

(x)xa xxa  
(x)xa xxa  
[x]xa xxa (x)xa

The unaccented syllables marked ( ) are very

frequently and that marked [ ] is almost always omitted.

The second poem, *Winter*, is in form an amphibrach, thus—

xax xax

or as Maclean describes it, an Iambic, anapaest, and a terminal syllable.

The first edition, the only edition for which Buchanan is himself responsible, is a small 8vo. volume of 68 pages. There is no preface, the title page being immediately followed by the first poem. The titles of the poems are set forth thus—"Mordbacht Dhe, Fulangas Chrìosd, La a Bhreitheamhnais, Bruadar, An Gaisgeach, An Claigean, An Geamhraidh, Urnuigh."

The poems are sparsely punctuated, as the following lines will show:—

Tha ghrian ann 'sna speuraibh  
 Ruith reise gach laeth;  
 Si 'giorradh do shaoghail,  
 Gach oidhiche a luidheas.  
 'S dlu ritheas an spàla,  
 Troi' shnath'naibh do bheatha;  
 Tha fitheadh dhuìt lèine,  
 Ni peisdean a chaitheamh.



# The Day of Judgment

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This poem is the *Dies Irae* of the Scottish Gael.

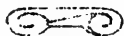
In the winter before Buchanan's death he met in Edinburgh the great philosopher, historian, and sceptic, David Hume. In course of conversation Hume expressed the opinion that the sublimest passage in all literature is Shakespeare's description in *The Tempest*, Act iv., Sc. 1, beginning "The cloud-capped towers," etc., but Buchanan immediately quoted words still more impressive from the Revelation of St. John xx., 11-13, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God," etc. It is one of the great inspired descriptions of the Day of Judgment.

From the Confessions it is clear that the thought of the great Day was familiar to Buchanan from his childhood. It made an irresistible appeal to his gloomy and vivid imagination, and with the unerring touch of genius he filled in the details from symbols at once appropriate and familiar to his folk.

Thus arose beneath his hand a picture of darkest terror, but framed in a purpose of pure

gold, the love of Jesus. See for example the third stanza.

In this and the other poems the captions for the different sections and the numbers of stanzas do not belong to the original. They are introduced here for the sake of clearness.



## THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

### 1.—THE THEME.

#### I.

While of this world the greater part  
Love not the Lord, nor hear His call,  
Nor yet believe within their heart  
That He will come as Judge of all.

#### II.

In sinful sleep they slumber on,  
And dream of wealth and worldly bliss,  
Heedless that when this life is gone  
The eternal joys of Heaven they miss.

#### III.

Lord, rouse them by Thy word most strong  
To due repentance, timely fear,  
And bless to every one this song  
Who lends it to a loving ear.

#### IV.

And rouse, O Lord, my earth-dulled thought,  
And loose my tongue to tell abroad  
The wondrous glory, as I ought,  
And terror of the Day of God.

---

### 2.—THE RESURRECTION.

#### V.

At midnight, when a slumber deep  
Wraps all the world in rest profound.  
Mankind shall be aroused from sleep  
By the last trumpet's awful sound.

## VI.

The great archangel, on a cloud,  
With sounding trumpet, will be seen,  
Calling mankind, with accents loud,  
To the last Judgment to convene.

## VII.

“ O! hearken, all ye sons of men,  
The world is now come to an end;  
Ye dead, arise to life again,  
And see the Son of God descend.”

## VIII.

Then shall the trumpet blast resound,  
And hills and seas shall flee away;  
The dead shall startle in the ground,  
The living tremble in dismay.

## IX.

Earth shall be rent and backward rolled  
By tempest breath before him sped,  
And, like an ant-hill's shifting mould,  
The grave pours forth her countless dead.

## X.

And then shall gather hands and feet,  
Once buried far apart in space,  
With mighty rumblings bones will meet,  
Each rushing to its proper place.

## XI.

The righteous dead shall first awake  
From restful sleep and life resume,  
Their souls shall down from glory break  
And meet them at the open tomb.

## XII.

They shall with joy lift up their head,  
For their deliverance is near,  
Like summer bloom o'er orchards spread  
Christ's beauty shall on them appear.

## XIII.

Within, the Holy Spirit's aid  
Hath made them holy, pure, devout,  
And in Christ's righteousness arrayed  
They are made glorious without.

## XIV.

The wicked shall be raised up next,  
Like ugly monsters from the pit,  
To meet their bodies, sore perplexed,  
Their souls the depths of hell shall quit.

## XV.

Then shall the wretched soul complain—  
“O body, which I hate and loathe!  
Alas! why didst thou rise again  
To bring new torments on us both?”

## XVI.

“In thy foul flesh must I be pent  
As in a prison-house again?  
Alas! that e'er I did consent  
To thy brute lusts and longings vain.

## XVII.

“Can I not leave thee more for aye?  
Has death on thee no longer power?  
Will fire not waste thy bones away,  
Or wrath of God thy flesh devour?”

## XVIII.

Great men and kings shall then arise,  
Who have no power beyond the grave;  
None shall their persons recognise  
From any wretch who was their slave.

## XIX.

And haughty men who would not deign  
Before Almighty God to bow—  
O see them on their knees in vain  
Praying to rocks and mountains now!

## XX.

“Descend, ye mountains, on our head,  
With crashing rock and rolling stone,  
Destroy us from the presence dread  
Of Him who sits upon the Throne.”

## XXI.

Out of his caves of darkness thrust  
The Devil comes with demon train;  
Reluctant comes because he must,  
And drags behind his heavy chain.

---

## 3.—THE COMING OF CHRIST.

## XXII.

A ruddy blush along the sky,  
Like dawn of morning rising red,  
Now shows that Christ Himself is nigh,  
Bringing the day of doom and dread.

## XXIII.

Then like the Great King's chamber door,  
The parting clouds before Him yield,  
And clothed with glory evermore,  
The mighty Judge shall be revealed.

## XXIV.

A rainbow round His head on high,  
His voice like mountain torrents loud,  
And keen as lightning flash His eye,  
That pierces thickest thunder cloud.

## XXV.

The sun, that shining lamp of space,  
Shall yield before His glory bright,  
The dazzling brightness of His face  
Shall dim and quench her borrowed light.

## XXVI.

A robe of mourning she will take,  
The moon shall glow a blood-red ball,  
The powers of the sky shall shake,  
And all the stars of heaven fall.

## XXVII.

Along the skies they bound and toss,  
Like fruit from trees when tempests rise,  
Falling like raindrops thick and close,  
Their glory dimmed as dead men's eyes.

## XXVIII.

On fiery chariot Christ shall ride,  
With thunders rolling round His path,  
Bearing His voice through heaven wide,  
Rending the clouds with storm and wrath.

## 4.—END OF THE WORLD.

## XXIX.

Out from His chariot-wheels shall go  
The fiery torrents of His ire,  
The awful floods shall downward flow,  
And wrap the world in flaming fire.

## XXX.

The elements with fervent heat  
Shall melt like wax in furnace glow,  
On high the flames from mountains meet,  
And all the oceans boil below.

## XXXI.

The miser hills that now withhold  
Their hidden hoards of shining ore,  
Shall liberal streams of liquid gold  
And molten treasures round them pour.

## XXXII.

O ye that gathered gold accurst,  
With lust of wealth and crime and blood,  
Now quench at last your burning thirst,  
And freely drink the generous flood.

## XXXIII.

And ye who gave the world your faith,  
Lament its fate with mournful cry;  
Behold it wrestling now with death,  
As when a strong man comes to die.

## XXXIV.

Its veins that erst ran cool and sweet  
Along the glens in gladsome rills,  
Are forced aloft by inward heat  
To boil and rage among the hills.



## XXXV.

Behold it tremble far and near,  
Till rocks are loosed and mountains shake;  
Its dying sighs and groaning hear,—  
Its heart within it seems to break.

## XXXVI.

The azure curtain of our sphere,  
Hung like a mantle round the earth,  
Shall curl in flames and disappear  
Like bark upon the burning hearth.

## XXXVII.

Dense clouds shall choke the heated air,  
Black smoke in masses shall ascend,  
The wasting flames shall everywhere  
In ruddy ringlets wreath and bend.

## XXXVIII.

Around the globe shall roll in air  
The voice of thunders vast and deep;  
The flames shall lick the heavens bare,  
As heather burns from mountains steep.

## XXXIX.

And still the fiery storm to urge  
The four strong winds together haste,  
And, with the might of angels, scourge  
The willing flames to wilder waste.

## XL.

Thus do destroying powers repeal  
God's six days' work with one accord,  
But Thy dominions would not feel  
The loss of thousand worlds, O Lord!

## 5.—THE JUDGE.

## XLI.

While all things thus dissolve and die  
Amid creation's final throes,  
The Judge Himself is drawing nigh  
To bring each case to fitting close.

## XLII.

He shall descend from Heaven's height,  
His Majesty with power displayed,  
Upon His throne of glory bright,  
In all His Deity arrayed.

## XLIII.

A thousand thunders in His hand,  
To blast His foes before His face,  
Wait quivering for His least command,  
Like hounds on leash in time of chase.

## XLIV.

His Court unnumbered angels fill,  
Their eyes are fixed upon the King,  
All ready to perform His will  
In every place with willing wing.

## XLV.

O Judas! come before Him now,  
And all who were like thee enticed,  
All who were traitors such as thou,  
For worthless trifles selling Christ.

## XLVI.

Ye senseless ones who craved for gold  
More than the bliss of Paradise,  
Your foolish commerce now behold,  
And ruin that before you lies.

## XLVII.

Ye proud, who would have been ashamed  
To hear Him in your homes adored,  
His justice cannot now be blamed  
If you are banished from the Lord.

## XLVIII.

O Herod! see the King who bore  
Thine insults heaped upon his head,  
Whose glory thou didst mock of yore  
With mimic robe of royal red.

## XLIX.

See Him as Judge of all the earth,  
With flames as with a garment clad,  
Come to reward the men of worth,  
And to destroy the proud and bad.

## L.

And thou, O Pilate! look and see  
A change surprising and complete;  
Is that the Man condemned by thee  
Before thine earthly judgment-seat?

## LI.

Can yonder Head, of Godlike grace,  
Be that which men did bind with thorn?  
And was it on yon glorious Face  
The Jews around thee spat in scorn?

## LII.

Was it enough the sun on high  
Refused to see their deeds abhorred?  
Why did not all creation die  
When they had crucified its Lord?

## 6.—THE JUDGMENT.

## LIII.

He sends His angels far and wide,  
To the four winds beneath the skies,  
To hasten in from every side  
The people to the Great Assize.

## LIV.

From east and west assemble now  
All that have ever been alive,  
Swarming, like bees upon a bough  
When they have risen from the hive.

## LV.

Then shall a glorious angel raise  
Christ's blood-marked banner waving free,  
To gather those that loved His ways,  
And made His sufferings their plea.

## LVI.

“Now gather to Me all My saints,  
And let all those assembled be,  
Who made, by faith and love's constraints,  
A covenant of grace with Me.”

## LVII.

Then turns the Judge with altered looks  
To give His foes their sentence fit,  
And He shall open all the books  
Wherein the people's sins are writ.

## LVIII.

And open every heart, that there  
All may discover and abhor  
The loathsome things that made their lair  
Within its desecrated door.

## LIX.

When they shall such a sight obtain,  
God's justice they shall see with shame,—  
A shame to blast their souls with pain,  
And burn their faces like a flame.

## LX.

Then sounds the trumpet loud and clear,  
“Let there be neither stir nor speech,”  
That great and small may plainly hear  
The judgment now pronounced on each.

## LXI.

“Ye covetous, whose chosen part  
Was in the wealth you could procure,  
Who closed your ears and locked your heart  
Against the pleadings of the poor.

## LXII.

“The hungry you have never fed,  
Nor clothed the naked from the cold,  
Although I filled your store with bread,  
And every year increased your fold.

## LXIII.

“My heavenly bliss ye cannot taste,  
Of love and truth and mercy void;  
My likeness, from your souls defaced,  
Condemns you now as self-destroyed.

## LXIV.

Swearers who often did entrust  
Your souls to Satan—impious vow!  
Think not your sentence is unjust,  
'Tis meet to grant your prayer now.

## LXV.

“And ye who sharpened like a knife  
A bitter tongue for every theme,  
Stirring up scandal, spite, and strife,  
And even daring to blaspheme.

## LXVI.

“I think not sweet the hissings flung,  
Foul serpents, from your loathsome lip,  
Nor praises from your forked tongue,  
With dew of poison on its tip.

## LXVII.

“And ye who from My worship erred,  
Who did not hold my dwellings dear,  
When in My house My law ye heard,  
Each hour seemed longer than a year.

## LXVIII.

“How could you e’er enjoy above  
The endless Sabbath of the Lord?  
How could your souls for ever love  
The things your nature has abhorred?

## LXIX.

“Ye envious, with jealous hearts,  
Who find your grief in others’ bliss,  
Whose very soul with sorrow smarts,  
When others seize the prize you miss,

## LXX.

“How could you ever happy be,  
If you in glory had a share,  
When you would many thousands see  
Above yourselves exalted there?

## LXXI.

“If one of higher rank were seen  
In all the realms of God to dwell,  
Would not your envy and your spleen  
Kindle in heaven the fires of hell?”

## LXXII.

“And ye who walked in ways impure,  
All that debased the marriage bed,  
Who could not holiness endure,  
But were by carnal passions led.

## LXXIII.

“Ye loved to burn with hot desire,  
And now I have prepared you heat;  
Your bed shall be of burning fire,  
And folding flames your linen sheet.

## LXXIV.

“If you were brought to heaven with Me,  
Like swine into a royal room,  
Your souls impure would tortured be,  
Your starving lusts with want consume.

## LXXV.

“All worthy of My heavenly land,  
Unto My right assemble these,  
And gather to My other hand  
The withered from the fruitful trees.”

## LXXVI.

Thus shall He separate with care  
The sheep from goats on either side,  
As when upon a hillock bare  
A shepherd may his flock divide.

## 7.—FUTURE OF THE BLESSED.

## LXXVII.

Those on His right He shall address—

“Ye who are by My grace prepared,  
Come and the Kingdom now possess,  
Where endless happiness is shared.

## LXXVIII.

“The gate against you locked before,  
My life and death have burst it wide;  
The spear has made for you a door,  
A new wide entrance in My side.

## LXXIX.

“Ye now to Paradise shall move,  
With endless joy and blessings rife,  
And all your sores and wounds shall prove  
The virtues of the Tree of Life.

## LXXX.

“The flaming sword that waved beneath  
When Eve and Adam sinned, has found  
Deep in my heart a living sheath,  
And in My blood its flames are drowned.

## LXXXI.

“Sit ye beneath her branches fair,  
Her leafy screen that never fades,  
And tune your tongues for praises there,  
Like thrushes in the branches' shades.

## LXXXII.

“Upon her beauty feast your eyes,  
Her shade from noonday heat will shield;  
Her fragrant leaves shall health supply,  
Her fruit shall life immortal yield.



## LXXXIII.

“No fruit of Paradise is now  
Forbidden, all to you is free;  
Eat fearlessly from every bough,  
No biting serpent there shall be.

## LXXXIV.

“And all your souls’ desires above  
Shall in your God be satisfied,  
That Fount of mercy, truth, and love  
That shall forever full abide.

## LXXXV.

“Salvation’s great and wondrous plan  
Search out in all its width and height;  
My works through all My Kingdom scan,  
With knowledge still your minds delight.

## LXXXVI.

“Your wisdom, beauty, love, and joy,  
Let them from age to age increase;  
Let nothing e’er your souls annoy,  
Let nothing e’er disturb your peace.

## LXXXVII.

“No eye hath seen, no ear hath heard,  
The joys I have for you in store;  
Go, and the blessings there conferred  
Shall tell the tale for evermore.”

## 8.—THE DOOM OF THE LOST.

## LXXXVIII.

But to the people on His left,  
He speaks with anger on His brow,—  
“All ye of love to God bereft,  
Depart from Me to Satan now.

## LXXXIX.

“My curse shall on you still attend,  
And plague your souls with sorrows dire;  
Depart! and suffer without end  
The torments of eternal fire.”

## XC.

As rent the earth to swallow those  
Who went with Corah's house astray,  
So shall the grave her mouth disclose  
Beside them, yawning for her prey.

## XCI.

As that huge whale in eastern seas  
Took Jonah in its monster maw,  
The Second Death shall gape for these,  
And round them close its horrid jaw.

## XCII.

Down in the caves of horror there  
Each baleful band together cleaves;  
The perjured, those that kill or swear,  
Drunkards, adulterers, and thieves.

## XCIII.

Like briars bound in bundles drear  
They lie in chains of iron tied,  
With those who were their comrades dear,  
Piercing like thorns into their side.

## XCIV.

Like lion fierce that tries in vain  
To burst his bonds with bleeding jaw,  
Their raging teeth shall bite their chain,  
But never can its iron gnaw.

## XCV.

The pains of death their souls surround,  
Their hearts eternal woe consumes,  
On seas of burning brimstone bound,  
Choked with green smoke and poison fumes.

## XCVI.

Like limpets fixed on rocky bed,  
They lie on heated reefs made fast;  
The boiling billows o'er their head  
Driven on by God's fierce anger-blast.

## XCVII.

When weary sleep would close their eyes,  
Despair and wrathful heat awake;  
Fire and the worm that never dies,  
Their torments ever hotter make.

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9.—THE CRY FROM HELL.

## XCVIII.

When they this hell shall occupy,  
And find who shall their tribute seize,  
We may set down their grievous cry  
In words of wretchedness like these—

## XCIX.

“ O that in nothingness I lay!  
Why did God bring me from its gloom?  
A thousand curses on the day  
My mother bore me in her womb.

## C.

“ Why had I ever reason’s aid,  
Or was with sense and judgment crowned?  
Why was I not an insect made,  
Or worm that grovels on the ground?

## CI.

“ Here through all ages must I be?  
Shall I not change for evermore?  
And am I in eternity,  
Swimming that sea without a shore?

## CII.

“ If I should count each glimmering star,  
Each leaf and blade that ever grew,  
All drops in ocean’s store that are,  
And sands that ocean’s shore bestrew,

## CIII.

“ And if for each I counted so  
A thousand years had passed away,  
Eternity would be as though  
It had begun but yesterday.

## CIV.

“ But, oh! can God’s own mercy cease?  
Will He for ever give me pain?  
Will He my fetters ne’er release?  
And ne’er relax my heavy chain?

## CV.

“ Oh, must this mouth by God ordained  
To sing the praises of His name,  
Be like a bellows here constrained  
To blow still higher hell’s green flame?

## CVI.

Although my pain exceeds my strength,  
The doom is just which I abide;  
But when shall justice be at length  
With all my tortures satisfied?

## CVII.

“ Oh, wilt Thou ne’er revenged be?  
Woe’s me! Are Nature’s laws reversed?  
Is this the death denounced by Thee  
Against poor Adam at the first?

## CVIII.

“ Wilt Thou for ever smaller spin  
My thread of life to bear Thine ire?  
Is it not enough for every sin  
To bear a thousand years of fire?

## CIX.

“ Though vengeance waste me to the end  
It will not make Thy praise more high;  
Thy greatness should not care to spend  
Its wrath on such poor mark as I.

## CX.

“ Lord, wilt Thou not destroy me quite,  
And let my soul be brought to nought?  
Cast me to nothing from Thy sight,  
Where is no feeling, act, or thought!

## CXI.

“ But, oh ! I suffer self-accused,  
I am not wronged in any wise ;  
Christ freely offered, I refused,  
His precious blood I did despise.

## CXII.

“ My conscience will condemn me still,  
That old reprover of my state ;  
Nor let me charge the Lord with ill,  
Or harshness for my fearful fate.

## CXIII.

“ I cast His laws behind my back,  
Suppressed His witness in my breast,  
Ran rapidly in ruin’s track,  
And closed my eyes to what was best.

## CXIV.

“ For all my sins of lust and pride,  
What vengeance must I not expect ?  
The sins that have Christ’s blood defied,  
And made His death of no effect.

## CXV.

“ And yet Thine attributes divine  
Must infinite for ever be ;  
And how can any sin of mine  
Make finite grace and love in Thee ?

## CXVI.

“ Oh, canst Thou cast me from Thy face.  
Where Thou shalt never hear me cry ?  
Is there in hell so dark a place  
As hide me from Thy piercing eye ?

## CXVII.

“Canst Thou in blessedness complete  
Hear Thy poor creature’s mournful tones---  
‘*Father*, have pity, ease the heat  
That boils the marrow in my bones!’

## CXVIII.

“Hear, O my God, my wretched prayer,  
And hear the groans that rack my breast,  
And for the sins I have to bear,  
Grant me, O Lord, this sole request—

## CXIX.

“When I shall weep in flaming fire,  
Until a thousand years go by,  
Till even torturing demons tire,  
*Grant then, O Lord, that I may die!*

## CXX.

“Though sad my prayer, it is not heard,  
Ne’er shall I rest or respite know,  
But everlasting life conferred  
To bear for ever endless woe.”

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10.—CONCLUSION.

## CXXI.

But stop, my verse, and turn away,  
Thy footsteps from the pit retrace;  
What words of counsel canst thou say  
To keep the living from that place?

## CXXII.

My reader, are not these things true  
That in these measures I declare?  
Oh, if they are, for pardon sue  
With instant penitence and prayer;

## CXXIII.

To Jesus flee without delay,  
Thy sins abhor, their ways abjure,  
With real faith His voice obey,  
As heard in His commandments pure.

## CXXIV.

Take Him with all that He can bring,  
None of His offices neglect,  
As Prophet and as Priest and King,  
To teach, to pardon, and protect.

## CXXV.

Keep thou His life before thy face,  
Let His example be thy guide;  
Make use of all the means of grace  
His love has for thy use supplied.

## CXXVI.

Trust only in His righteousness,  
Hope not thy worth can favour win,  
Rob not His grace of full success  
By nursing any darling sin.

## CXXVII.

So, to the glory of His love,  
Thou shalt be saved from sin and shame,  
And live in endless bliss above,  
Singing sweet praises to His name.



## NOTES.

- 1—The world—saoghal; from saecula.  
2—Heaven—pàrras, paradise.  
6—Judgment—mòid, moot, meeting, assize.  
9—Pour forth—brùchd, vomit, burst out.  
14—To meet—lit. to hold with their bodies  
awful tryst.  
21—Devil—diabhul, Lat. diabolus.  
24—Rainbow—bogha-frois, shower-bow.  
26—The moon as if drenched in blood.  
38—“ Like heather-burning against steep  
mountains.”  
40—O Lord—Rìgh nam fear, King of  
powers.  
43—Quivering—fonn-chrith, trembling of  
desire.  
50—Change—muthadh, Lat. muto.  
57—Lair—àros, resting-place.  
66—“ Not sweet to me the music of your  
hissing.”  
76—Separate—tearbain, sort out.  
84—Forever—gu cian nan cian, to remoteness  
of remotenesses.  
91—“ The black throat of the second Death.”  
95—Their hearts wrung out by sorrow.  
98—They prove to whom they pay tribute.  
101—All ages—Saoghal nan saogh'l, world of  
worlds, Lat. saecula saeculorum.

105—Bellows—balgan séididh, blowing bag.

113—Suppressed—mhùch, suffocated.

121—The pit—sloc na casgraidh, the pit of  
slaughter.

126—Darling sin—peacadh dàimh, kindred sin.

# Winter

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A description of the season of tempest and cold, the annual reminder that life itself must wane and wither. The poem has not a little of the gloom and the chill of its theme.

## W I N T E R.

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### I.

The summer is ended,  
The winter approaching  
As a foe has descended  
On our country encroaching;  
He will trample it under,  
Ferocious and savage,  
Its wealth he will plunder,  
Its loveliness ravage.

### II.

He will come on dark pinions,  
The bright sun concealing,  
From his frozen dominions  
Bring his brood all unfeeling;  
Wild snows of white feather,  
And screams ever louder,  
Hail and north wind together,  
Like pellets and powder.

### III.

Every flower on his nearing  
Is withered and closes,  
His lips sharply shearing  
From gardens their roses.  
Woods and groves he will mangle,  
Their robes rend asunder,  
The streams he will strangle,  
And bury them under.

## IV.

Set tempests in motion  
By force of his breathing;  
Put yeast in the ocean  
Till its billows are seething;  
The moorlands make hoary,  
With ferment and bluster;  
Give the stars a new glory,  
And burnish their lustre.

## V.

Beasts and men who neglected  
Their time for preparing  
Are now unprotected  
From tempests unsparing;  
While the prudent wax greedy,  
Assistance denying  
To the idle and needy,  
Though starving and dying.

## VI.

Bees and ants that collected  
The stores that are needful,  
By instinct directed,  
By wisdom made heedful,  
Eat food and drink nectar,  
With plenty and pleasing,  
Brown earth their protector,  
From storm and from freezing.

## VII.

But the flies that so gaily,  
When sunbeams were glancing,  
Enjoyed themselves daily  
In playing and dancing,  
Alas! unprepared for  
This wild wintry weather,  
Now perish uncared for  
In hundreds together.

---

## WARNINGS TO THE AGED.

## VIII.

But attend, my old hearer,  
Death's shadow so sable  
Is fast coming nearer,  
*That's* the winter I fable;  
If he makes thine acquaintance,  
Finding no preparation,  
No deathbed repentance  
Can prevent tribulation.

## IX.

To be godly were fitting  
When thy hair is fast greying,  
Face wasting and pitting,  
Teeth lost or decaying;  
Thy baldness extending,  
Eyes darkened and bleary,  
Back down to earth bending,  
Last bed of the weary.

## X.

The red stream much divided  
Through thy members fast flowing,  
Once bounded and glided,  
Warm, lusty, and glowing,  
But now has subsided,  
Since the life, proud and eager,  
In thy blood that resided  
Grows chilly and meagre.

## XI.

Life's bellows is sunken,  
Its working uneasy,  
All shrivelled and shrunken,  
Its breathing is wheezy;  
Thy body's harp slacking,  
And tuning refusing,  
Gives a sign of near packing  
When its strings are unloosing.

## XII.

Youth's morning is ended,  
Thy noon no more shineth,  
Thine eve hath descended,  
Thy sunset declineth;  
Did indolence bind thee,  
Thy talents neglected?  
Awake, lest death find thee  
By heaven rejected!

## XIII.

For life as one lives it  
Is likely to finish,  
And the habits one gives it  
Are hard to diminish;  
A truth unresisted  
This proverb we state in—  
“ Old wood that is twisted  
One never can straighten.”

---

## WARNING TO YOUTH.

## XIV.

Young man, what I sing of,  
Attend to it wholly;  
In the young happy spring of  
Thy youth beware folly;  
Age and sickness behind thee  
Are swiftly pursuing,  
If one of them find thee  
It may be thy undoing.

## XV.

Old age creeps behind thee  
A foe strange and thorough,  
With mist it will blind thee,  
Thy face it will furrow;  
With thy hair all frost-whitened,  
Of death's hue 'twill make thee,  
That hoar-frost, though sun-brightened,  
Will never forsake thee.



## XVI.

Bringing ills past conception,  
'Twill of reason bereave thee,  
Dim thy mental perception,  
Make memory leave thee,  
With thy feelings all faded,  
Insipid and senseless,  
Till, to childhood degraded,  
Thou art weak and defenceless.

## XVII.

Thy heart will grow rigid,  
No pleading can move it,  
So callous and frigid  
That nought can improve it;  
As the earth when hard frozen,  
Though over its face is  
Much treading, still shows in  
Its causeway no traces.

## XVIII.

From Nature learn reason,  
Fit order 'tis keeping;  
Thou must delve in due season,  
If thou wouldst be reaping.  
Get in summer the fuel  
In winter thou usest,  
Want and winter are cruel  
If the season thou lovest.

## XIX.

If thou sow no good seeds in  
Youth's springtime, the Devil  
Will sow his vile weeds in  
Thy vain heart to revel;  
Vice or virtue is growing  
In the soil thou art keeping,  
And as has been the sowing  
So shall be the reaping.

## XX.

Are thy passions unruly,  
And thy youth wild and idle?  
Then thine age cannot truly  
Their growing strength bridle.  
The young shoots green and bending  
Grown to trees will be stronger,  
Roots and boughs fast extending,  
Thou canst move them no longer.

## XXI.

Thy life is uncertain,  
Some blow may prove mortal,  
Then thy powers exert in  
Pressing in at life's portal;  
On the future relying  
Brings mischief, remember,  
And repentance when dying  
Is to sow in November.

## XXII.

The sun which, unceasing,  
Through heaven moves brightly,  
Is thy lifetime decreasing  
And shortening it nightly.  
The shuttle fast weaveth  
Thy life's threads, preparing  
Thy shroud, which it leaveth  
For worms to be wearing.

## XXIII.

If that awful condition  
Should come unexpected,  
'Twill open thy vision  
To ills unsuspected;  
Like a knife in thy heart will  
Thy conscience attack thee,  
And its torture and smart will  
On thorny bed rack thee.

## XXIV.

See the gay flies afflicted,  
By the summer forsaken,  
By tempests convicted,  
By doom overtaken;  
And see the ants' ample  
And wise preparation,  
Follow thou their example,  
And seek thy salvation.

## NOTES.

- 1—Winter—geamhradh, bitter season (Lat. hiems.)  
2—Hail—clach-meallain, stony lumps.  
6—Instinct—gliocas gun mhearachd, unerring wisdom.  
14—Spring—Ceitean, May.  
20—Bridle—srian, rein.  
21—November—Feill Martainn, Martinmas.

# The Greatness of God

---

It is clear from his written Confessions that the poet was at one period tempted to atheism. This was a necessary and passing phase of his remarkable mental development. Like all mystics, he loved to meditate on the divine nature—the only reality, the secret source and significance of all things. To us who read, the interest lies in the daring attempt of the created mind to comprehend its Maker. For, after all, what Buchanan gives us here is not a revelation of God but a revelation of his own soul and of the picture of God which it had formed and enshrined.

## THE GREATNESS OF GOD.

---

### I.

Oh, what is God, or what His name?  
The highest angels do not know;  
He dwells in light of dazzling flame,  
Where neither sight nor thought can go.

### II.

'Tis from Himself His being flows;  
In nature He is infinite;  
His uncreated powers repose  
Upon His self-sustaining might.

### III.

He ne'er was young, nor shall be old,  
His life through all the ages runs;  
His changeless years can ne'er be told  
Or measured out by changing suns.

### IV.

When grace and glory He displays,  
Immortal day around Him springs;  
The heavenly hosts avert their gaze,  
And hide their faces with their wings.

### V.

But if in wrath He show His face,  
The world shall tremble at His look,  
Unwonted terrors spread through space,  
And ocean flee at His rebuke.

## VI.

The works of nature fade and grow,  
From change to change they ceaseless run,  
His being knows no ebb or flow,  
And all His countless acts are one.

## VII.

Angels and men are never far  
From Nothingness, from which they came,  
His infinite perfections are  
From all eternity the same.

## VIII.

When Nothing heard His voice of yore,  
Creation into being rose;  
This globe and all its teeming store,  
The heavens and all that they disclose.

## IX.

Their varied excellence He viewed,  
And blessed His creatures every one;  
He saw His works were very good,  
And imperfection found in none.

## X.

The stars revolve with radiant light,  
Upon His palm in circles grand;  
Creation leans upon His might,  
Held in the hollow of His hand.

## XI.

Who can Thy being, Lord, contain,  
That deep where thought and reason sink?  
Angels and men are shells that fain  
Would all that mighty ocean drink.

## XII.

Thou hast been King, O God, for aye,  
Thy history has been little told;  
This world is but of yesterday,  
Few of Thy deeds our suns behold.

## XIII.

The sun and all things that exist  
Within its circling light, would be  
From Thy vast works as little missed  
As finger drop from brimming sea.

## XIV.

Creation, glorious though it be,  
Brings not the power of God to light;  
For all His works that we can see  
Give but an earnest of His might.

## XV.

Our shallow minds in vain explore  
This fathomless and shoreless main;  
One letter of God's name is more  
Than human reason can sustain.

## XVI.

Nought is there like Thyself among  
The works which Thou of old didst frame;  
Nor is there speech on human tongue,  
But Thine own Word can tell Thy name.



## NOTES.

- 1—God—Dia, the effulgent; Lat. Deus; Gr. Theos.
- 5—Space—cruinne-cé, the round of the universe.
- 8—Nothing—neo-ni, no-thing; the void.
- 10—Creation—cruthach, from cruth to form. Lat. creo.
- 11—Shells—sligean maoraich, mussel shells.
- 14—God—Dia nam feart, the God of feats, a phrase frequently used in the religious language of the Gael. Feart, Lat. virtus.

## The Sufferings of Christ

---

Buchanan's purpose plainly was to give his countrymen in their own tongue and in a form easily remembered the main outline of the gospel story. It was composed while the poet was a schoolmaster at Drumcastle, probably in 1753. On account of the Jacobite Rebellion, which had been stamped out in 1746, the country was still in a restless condition, and small detachments of Militia were maintained in the Rannoch district to overawe the disaffected. One such detachment consisted of 12 men from Sutherlandshire who brought some religious songs from the Reay country. Buchanan having heard some of these Gaelic hymns was encouraged to compose this poem on the Sufferings of Christ. Simple as a Christmas earol, it soon became a favourite throughout Perthshire, being sung to a sweet plaintive air, which will be found in the "Songs of the Gael," No. 21.

## THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

---

### I.

The sufferings of my Saviour  
My mournful muse shall sing,  
The humble birth and cruel death  
Of our all-glorious King.  
Oh, wonder most amazing,  
That a human tongue can name,  
The God of all eternity  
A suckling child became!

### II.

When by the Holy Spirit's aid,  
Within the Virgin's womb,  
Our feeble human nature  
With His own He did assume;  
He veiled His dread divinity,  
And flesh the Word was made,  
The mystery of God-head was  
In Jesus Christ displayed.

### III.

He came a helpless infant,  
In a humble stable born,  
With none to offer Him a home,  
Unwelcomed and forlorn;  
No ministers attended Him,  
In garments rich and fair,  
But horse and ox surrounded Him,  
Who was of glory heir.

## IV.

Scarce was His coming known to men,  
When mighty foes awoke,  
And He was driven to Egypt  
To escape from Herod's stroke.  
So vengeful was his fury,  
That would Jesus overwhelm,  
He sent and slew all suckling babes  
That were in all his realm.

## V.

The foxes had their coverts  
Where from hot pursuit to hide,  
The birds had nests in lofty trees,  
Where they might safe abide,  
But He who had created them,  
And all the things that live,  
Was wandering upon the earth  
A homeless fugitive.

## VI.

Now when our blessed Saviour  
Dwelt awhile among us then,  
He was a good Physician,  
And He healed the sons of men;  
For all their dire diseases,  
And the ailments they endured,  
By His kindly touch were turned to health,  
And by His word were cured.

## VII.

He gave the helpless dumb a tongue,  
He gave the halting might,  
He gave the deaf their hearing,  
And He gave the blind their sight;  
He cleansed the leper's loathsomeness,  
And poured in health instead;  
He eased the sufferings of the soul,  
And raised to life the dead.

## VIII.

He preached a joyful gospel  
To the poor amid their care,  
And offered glorious freedom  
To all prisoners of despair,  
If they but heard His word of truth  
With pure and living faith,  
And so became converted  
From the carnal works of death.

## IX.

Out in the lonely wilderness  
Five thousand round Him stood,  
Three days they heard His words of life  
Until they lacked for food;  
The little that they had He blessed,  
Five loaves and fishes twain;  
They ate, and all were satisfied,  
And much did still remain.

## X.

The raging surges of the sea  
By His rebuke were quelled,  
The wanton strength of stormy wind  
Within His fist He held;  
But all the wonders Jesus wrought  
In order to unfold,  
Would fill more written records  
Than the world itself could hold.

## XI.

The time for His return to Heaven  
At length was drawing near,  
And then He made a farewell feast  
For His disciples dear;  
Around His board He welcomed them,  
Their spirits to refresh  
With wine and bread that signified  
His living blood and flesh.

## XII.

He gave them this as ordinance  
To keep for evermore  
In memory of the sufferings  
That for their sake He bore;  
Their food and drink the energies  
His mighty love supplied,  
A sweet memorial of the death  
That for their sake He died.

## XIII.

Then in the garden came His hour  
Of heaviness and pain,  
When He received a cup of wrath,  
A bitter cup to drain;  
His veins through all His body seethed  
With agony profound,  
Until His sweat like drops of blood  
Was raining to the ground.

## XIV.

Then falling down upon His knees,  
With fervour did He pray,  
“Beloved Father, if it may,  
Let this cup pass away!  
But for this end I came, to save  
My people every one,  
Then shall I ask no favour,  
But Thy gracious will be done!”

## XV.

That was a cup of horror  
That our Saviour then received;  
The sins of all the world He bore,  
Their foulness to Him cleaved;  
What men through all eternity  
Could bear of righteous doom,  
All in that hour was laid on Him,  
He bore it in their room.

## XVI.

The devil in the crafty heart  
Of Judas made abode,  
A hypocrite and covetous,  
Who turned his back on God;  
That traitor sold his Saviour,  
Who desired to bring him bliss,  
And to His deadly enemies  
Betrayed Him with a kiss.

## XVII.

Then was He made a prisoner,  
Though no fault they could descry,  
And brought to Pilate's judgment seat,  
To be condemned to die.  
That judge unrighteous set at naught  
The light his conscience knew,  
False witnesses receiving,  
He condemned the Just and True.

## XVIII.

Then was He bound for scourging,  
And their blows His frame abused,  
Torn from the bone His holy flesh  
In livid weals was bruised;  
His sacred body thus they spoiled,  
And caused His wounds to stream,  
And scattered heedlessly the blood  
That could the world redeem.



## XIX.

Then binding prickly boughs of brier,  
They weaved a crown of thorn,  
And placed as symbol on His head  
To show their hate and scorn;  
Pressed down into His temples  
Were the spikes most keen and hard,  
And, by their spittles foul defiled,  
His glorious face was marred.

## XX.

When they had placed His crown of shame,  
A robe they round Him fling,  
Arraying Him in purple  
With a sceptre as a King;  
Insulting Him they cried, "All hail,  
King of the Jews, to Thee!"  
And making mock obeisances,  
They bowed, and bent the knee.

## XXI.

His cross upon His shoulders  
They with fierce compulsion laid,  
They made Him bear the tree of death,  
And meekly He obeyed;  
But faint and worn with failing strength,  
He walked that weary road,  
Till labouring up the fatal mount  
He sank beneath His load.

## XXII.

He lay down unresisting  
On that bed of shame and pain,  
And naked on the tree was laid,  
And wrenched with cruel strain;  
His dear and holy body there  
They fastened firm and close,  
With nails and hammer fixing it  
Against the cruel cross.

## XXIII.

They raise the cross with Him thereon,  
By rugged nails upborne,  
And causing pangs unspeakable,  
His holy frame is torn;  
For every wound in hands and feet  
His weight suspended rends,  
And all the while the blood of life  
Down to the ground descends.

## XXIV.

And yet though they contrived his death  
Of infamy and pain  
Against His ruthless enemies  
He did not once complain;  
Nay, rather did he pray for them  
As intercessor true,  
"Father! do Thou forgive them,  
For they know not what they do."

## XXV.

Then poured on Him the wrath of God  
In floods from every side,  
God's gracious face was hidden,  
And His very sunshine died.  
"My God! my God! forsake Me not,"  
These horrors made Him plead;  
"Hide not Thy gracious face from Me,  
Nor leave Me in My need."

## XXVI.

If all the fiery vengeance  
That the Saviour suffered then  
Were laid upon the angel host  
And all the sons of men,  
They all would perish utterly,  
To swift destruction hurled,  
One drop of His fierce agony  
Would burn up all the world.

## XXVII.

The Lord of Hosts commanded,  
And around that mount arrayed  
All thinking beings every one  
Whom He of old had made,  
To see what love for creatures  
And what hate for sin He bore,  
That on His well-beloved Son  
This awful wrath should pour.

## XXVIII.

This was the language of his pains—  
“Ye people, have regard!  
Sin’s real nature see disclosed,  
And see its just reward;  
See the strict justice which for men  
I now must satisfy,  
Nought of the debt will it remit,  
But claims that I must die.”

## XXIX.

That was a death accursed, fraught  
With vengeance and with woe,  
A shameful death with pangs prolonged,  
With lingering steps and slow;  
Who can describe this fearful thing—  
To hang six hours alive,  
On tearing tendons held aloft  
While flesh and sinew rive!

## XXX.

The furnace of the wrath of God  
Had all His moisture dried,  
Like wax His faithful loving heart  
Was melting in His side,  
His tongue was cleaving to His mouth,  
His people’s advocate,  
His soul was wrung away from Him,  
And torn with terrors great.

## XXXI.

The clearness of His sight was dimmed,  
His eye became as glass,  
And sudden through His breaking heart  
Did throbs of anguish pass;  
A pallor overspread His face,  
Quenching its glorious light—  
Methinks I see Him shudder  
As He fights that bitter fight.

## XXXII.

Methinks I see His awful wounds,  
Torn open by the nails,  
On which the blackening blood encrusts  
As life within Him fails,  
The darkening hues of death descend,  
And all His beauty hide,  
Methinks I hear His weary sighs,  
The panting of His side.

## XXXIII.

At length did Jesus cry aloud;  
“I thirst!” they heard Him call—  
A bitter drink they offered Him  
Of vinegar and gall.  
Then said He, “It is finished,”  
And having loudly cried—  
A mighty cry, with parting strength  
He bowed His head and died.

## XXXIV.

That cry through all creation went,  
The mightiest ever heard,  
The strongest rocks on earth were rent,  
The dead of ages stirred;  
The very sun grew dark above,  
Below were change and gloom,  
A rocking, rumbling, dying world  
Seemed tottering to its doom.

## XXXV.

The heavens where endless gladness dwelt,  
With happy hosts on high,  
An unaccustomed sadness felt,  
And let their music die;  
Seeing descending to the grave  
Their Author and their King,  
And Death enchaining Him who gave  
Its life to everything.

## NOTES.

1—Muse—Dàn, a poem, carries a suggestion of wisdom.

2—Mystery—rùn diomhair, a hidden rune or secret.

3—Humble stable—stàbull diblidh, from Lat. stabulum debile.

Of glory heir—Da'n dual gach uile ghlòir; to whom all glory is due. Dual, hereditary right.

12—Energies—feartaibh, powers, virtues, efficacies. Lat. virtus.

15—Sin—peacadh from Lat. peccatum.

28—Reward—duais, that which is due.

31—Shudder—ealaghris, creeping horror.

35—Heavens—flaitheas, the lordly region.

# The Dream

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Here we have the poet as philosopher. He faces with refreshing frankness the facts of human life—a more cheerful Ecclesiastes, a more responsible Omar Kayyam. His position is that of a Christian Stoic, and the manful way in which he faced the duties and the hardships of his own earthly lot as teacher, preacher, and head of a family, is the best commentary on his poem.



## THE DREAM.

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### I.

When sleep her curtain round me drew  
I dreamed vain dreams as others do,  
Pursuing joy from place to place,  
Which still eluded my embrace.

### II.

Methought one came and thus began---  
“ And thinkest thou, O foolish man,  
To seize the wandering wind at will,  
Or that this world thy heart can fill?

### III.

“ For happiness thou need'st not try  
In thing or place beneath the sky;  
Thy body's rest is 'neath the sod,  
Thy soul's in paradise with God.

### IV.

“ When Adam ate the fatal fruit,  
Sin did all earthly things pollute,  
Laid labour's blight upon our race,  
And left the world a heart-sick place.

### V.

“ To bliss of soul he lost the right,  
And all that Garden's dear delight;  
His wildered seed in sad amaze,  
Like lamb that from its mother strays.

## VI.

“ Bleating and rushing here and there,  
They seek protection, joy, and care;  
But in this world they ever find  
A stepdame heedless, harsh, unkind.

## VII.

“ Searching for peace they know no rest,  
And lying shadows mock their quest;  
For sweets of life they suck in vain  
At barren breasts of worldly gain.

## VIII.

“ With some sore strait thou still must cope,  
And still relief will mock thy hope,  
An arm's length off it always lies,  
But never canst thou seize the prize.

## IX.

“ No test or trial e'er can cure  
From trusting in that lying lure;  
Deceived a thousand times thereby,  
Thou art not now one whit more nigh.

## X.

“ What thou wert eager to enjoy  
Has not possession made it cloy?  
Hope gives more pleasure to the breast  
Than does a royal crown possessed.

## XI.

“ Just as the rose in garden shade  
When plucked begins at once to fade;  
Scarce dost thou seize the blossom gay,  
When bloom and perfume both decay.

## XII.

“None free from trouble wilt thou find  
Among the millions of mankind;  
The monarch has as many sighs  
As has the slave that lowest lies.

## XIII.

“Each brand its coil of smoke must bear,  
Each good must have of ill a share;  
The thorn beneath the rose’s pride,  
The sting and honey side by side.

## XIV.

“If one should affluence possess,  
Judge not by that his happiness;  
The clearest well that thou dost know  
Holds hidden sediment below.

## XV.

“And if thou draw, with sudden sip,  
The placid water to thy lip,  
Up swirl the dregs that lay beneath,  
And fill with gritty sand thy teeth.

## XVI.

“If high exalted rank thou see,  
’Tis like a nest in lofty tree,  
Disturbed by all the winds that blow,  
Threatened by storms with overthrow.

## XVII.

“He whom the world serves best has got  
A crook of some kind in his lot,  
Which all his striving and his skill  
Can ne’er make straight: ’tis crooked still.

## XVIII.

“ Like a bent staff, ill-set in grain,  
Whose gnarls and knots are stretched in vain,  
For when thou dost its top amend,  
It twists far worse the other end.

## XIX.

“ When manna fell from heaven of yore,  
All Israel gathered less or more;  
But every one’s was found exact,—  
None had too much, and no one lacked.

## XX.

“ And such is earthly happiness,  
And every joy thou canst possess;  
Along with wealth and honours rare  
Come waste and grief and carking care.

## XXI.

“ Pile on thy balance wealth untold,  
The lead will still outweigh the gold;  
A kingdom’s worth will not avail  
Against its weight to turn the scale.

## XXII.

“ Fit portions are by all possessed,  
And though thou thinkest more were best,  
Excess of wealth in any share  
Can never countervail its care.

## XXIII.

“ Thy griefs from fickle fancies rise,  
Which now desire and now despise;  
The world itself could not content  
A mind by warring passions rent.

## XXIV.

“ The flesh to this alone aspires,  
To gorge and glut its foul desires;  
Nor would it wish a heaven more high  
Than wallowing in its lusts to lie.

## XXV.

“ But though thy flesh would like full well  
Forever on the earth to dwell,  
Thy pride would fain ascend full-blown  
As high as God’s eternal throne.

## XXVI.

“ Wouldst thou have lasting joy restored?  
Commit thy way unto the Lord,  
With faith and love and chastened will,  
And He will thy desires fulfil.

## XXVII.

“ For every real earthly bliss  
That man can have will go with this;  
Health, food, and raiment will not cease,  
Nor freedom, friendship, love, and peace.”

## XXVIII.

Here from my slumber I awoke,  
And from my wondrous dreams I broke;  
Vain shadows then I followed not,  
But was contented with my lot.

## NOTES.

- 4—Pollute—druigh, sink into, drench.
- 9—No whit more nigh—co fhada uat an diugh 's an dè, as far away to-day as yesterday.
- 10—Cloy—searbh, bitter.  
Hope—dùil, expectation.
- 14—Judge not—na meas a shòlas bhi thar chàch. Do not calculate his happiness to be above that of others.
- 23—Fickle fancies—iomluas t'inntinn, the hurried tossing of thy mind.
- 25—Thy pride—àrdan agus uaill, loftiness and boastfulness.

# The Hero

---

Buchanan knew well the weakness of his countrymen — their admiration for martial glory, their proneness to quick enthusiasm rather than steady self-control, their emotionalism, and their worship of personal prowess. Against all this the fine eulogium of the true Hero is an eloquent warning. The events of the period gave point to every stanza. For the last brilliant flash of the military ardour of the Highland clans had just been extinguished in blood, and the echoes of opposing cannon were still reverberating among the mountains when this poet-prophet of his people directed their thoughts to a far other and nobler warfare within the domain of the mind and the heart of man. It was a courageous assault upon the inveterate paganism of a gallant race, and its very title, An Gaisgeach, the Man of Prowess, still appeals to the popular imagination.

## THE HERO.

---

### I.

No hero Alexander was,  
Nor Cæsar, though he vanquished Rome;  
They conquered men and won applause,  
But were the slaves of lusts at home.

### II.

It is not brave to wound and kill,  
Nor glory frequently to fight,  
Nor great to have a haughty will,  
Nor valour ruthlessly to smite.

### III.

A hero he who has subdued  
The dread of death, the fears of life,  
And who with manly fortitude  
Encounters fate in fearless strife;

### IV.

Who will not start in guilty fear,  
If conscience should begin to speak,  
But will her friendly pleadings hear,  
And answer her with justice meek.

### V.

The hero can his will compel  
The rule of reason to obey;  
Beneath its standard he will quell  
Wild thoughts in disciplined array.



## VI.

His appetites he will subdue,  
His body's servants dutiful;  
Their low desires he yields not to,  
For they were never born to rule.

## VII.

At night, when he lays down his head,  
His guardian virtues watch and ward,  
Like soldiers round a monarch's bed,  
From midnight foes his life to guard.

## VIII.

At morning when he will arise,  
His thoughts assemble and obey  
His orders, while like captain wise  
He sets them all in war array—

## IX.

To war against earth's griefs and cares,  
The evil passions of the flesh,  
And Satan's strategies and snares,  
With which he would men's souls enmesh.

## X.

Firm as a rock, his mind defies  
Both idle fears and terrors great;  
His penetrating, watchful eyes  
See the barbed hook within the bait.

## XI.

To him the world displays in vain  
Its glory, rank, and precious things;  
His mind and heart such wealth contain  
That he can pity crownéd kings.

## XII.

And though the wanton spread her net,  
No kindling lust His will can melt;  
In vain for him her charms are set.  
Her eye's dark lightnings are unfelt.

## XIII.

His foe shall not succeed at length,  
Though short-lived troubles on him seize;  
A bruised spirit is his strength,  
And he shall conquer on his knees.

## XIV.

Truth is his helmet, he shall wield  
The Holy Scripture as his sword;  
The grace of faith shall be his shield,  
His confidence is in the Lord.

## XV.

His mind is happy and serene,  
His conscience is a faithful friend;  
He owns a store of wealth unseen  
This world can never waste or end.

## XVI.

No fawning flattery will he hear,  
No scandal makes his peace depart,  
No evil tidings make him fear,  
Nor can vile slander wound his heart.

## XVII.

Awake, and take thine arms, my soul!  
And emulate this hero true,  
Thy passions conquer and control,  
A kingdom in thyself subdue.

## XVIII.

Let thine ambition mount the skies,  
This world is poor, its prizes small,  
A paltry hummock, low it lies,  
And men like ants around it crawl.

## XIX.

With tireless feet o'er countless tracks  
Their treasures they together draw,  
Trampling across each others' backs,  
Wrangling for rubbish, sticks, and straw.

## XX.

When sights like these thy mind employ,  
Thy thoughts assemble and control;  
Wealth, peace, and happiness enjoy,  
An endless store within thy soul.

## NOTES.

- 1—Hero—Gaisgeach, man of valour.  
 Alexander—Alasdair mòr, Great Alexander. Usually Alasdair Uabhreach, proud Alexander. (From Uabhair—over; the overman, the superman.)
- 2—Valour—treubhantas, tribe-worthiness.
- 3—Fate—Na h-uile ni a ta dha'n dàn, everything that is destiny for him. (Dàn, destiny, fate; from a root akin to Do, I give; that which is apportioned.)
- 4—Answer—Dùinidh se a beul, will close her mouth with justice.
- 8—War array—òrdugh blàir, order of battle.
- 14—Helmet—clogaid; from claigeann, a skull.  
 Shield—sgiath, a wing.
- 16—Fawning—tlà, smooth; Gr. tlao; Lat. tuli, latus.
- 19—Wrangling—trod, scolding.

# The Skull

---

In the lone burying-ground of Lassintulich the remains of a beautiful young lady, the Laird's daughter, had just been laid to rest, and Buchanan, who had attended the funeral, was resting on a grave when he noticed a human skull that had been previously thrown up by the spade. Being in a pensive mood, he began to meditate on this relic of mortality, his thoughts flowing easily into the form of a poem. This was near the close of his life, or at least after his removal to Drumcastle in 1764. The incident is recorded in Rev. John Sinclair's "Schiehallion."

The reader will of course compare the lines by Shakespeare and Byron on the same theme.

Though written in furthest Perthshire in the middle of the eighteenth century, the poem is essentially modern. Note, for example, the picture of the hard landlord and compare Burns' later reference to "poor tenant bodies' lack o' cash."

## THE SKULL.

---

### I.

At the burial mound,  
As I sat on the ground,  
A shapeless grey skull I espied ;  
I raised it and scanned  
Its form in my hand,  
And turning it over I sighed.

### II.

Its beauty is gone,  
Of sense it has none  
To know when a man comes near.  
In its jaws are no teeth,  
And no tongue lies beneath,  
Nor palate for taste is here.

### III.

In its cheek is no red,  
Nor hair on its head,  
Nor ear to distinguish my tone ;  
No smell hath its nose,  
No breath comes or goes,  
And for ridge, lo ! a hollow of bone.

### IV.

No flash in the eye  
Under eyelash I spy ;  
No eyeballs are here to see,  
But worms of the tomb  
Dig two holes in their room  
Where visions of beauty should be.

## V.

The brain in this crust  
Is vanished in dust,  
No more has it purpose or mind  
To finish each plan  
It so keenly began,  
And left as a tangle behind.

## VI.

Thy face shows not now  
Whose cranium wert thou,  
If king or if noble rich;  
Alexander the Great  
Is in the same state  
As a slave that has died in a ditch.

## VII.

Gravedigger, come near,  
And breathe in mine ear,  
To whom did this headpiece belong;  
Then ask it will I  
Of its life long gone by,  
Though it ne'er will reply to my song.

## VIII.

Say wert thou a maid,  
In beauty arrayed,  
Whose eyes with soft brilliance shone  
With their charms as a net  
That was daintily set  
For the youths that they sparkled upon?

## IX.

Of thy graces that won  
Such triumphs, there's none  
But would now fill the eye with disgust;  
Oh, shame on the tomb  
That ravaged thy bloom,  
And turned all thy beauty to dust.

## X.

Or say if thou wert  
A judge both expert  
And just, every cause to arrange,  
Impartial and true,  
And courageous too  
All villainous crimes to avenge.

## XI.

Or was thy justice sold  
For a handful of gold?  
Didst thou favour the wealthy and strong,  
While the weak, helpless poor  
Had still to endure  
Oppression and insult and wrong?

## XII.

If thou wert not true  
To give sentences due,  
But justice and mercy contemned,  
There's a just Judge on high,  
And when thou didst die,  
His judgment-seat saw thee condemned.



## XIII.

A physician wert thou,  
With health to endow,  
Overcoming disease and decay,  
Speaking boastfully still  
Of thy salves and thy skill,  
That could rob even death of its prey.

## XIV.

Alas for thy skill!  
It served thee but ill,  
When the time of thine anguish had come;  
No plaster or dose  
That thou couldst compose  
Could keep thee one hour from the tomb.

## XV.

A commander hast been?  
With glance fierce and keen,  
Hast thou armies to victory led?  
Whose foes in affright  
Were scattered in flight,  
Leaving masses of wounded and dead.

## XVI.

Did thy mighty sword fail,  
Did thy haughty heart quail,  
When met by the hosts of the tomb?  
That thy tactics were foiled,  
And thy glory despoiled,  
By an army of insects o'ercome?

## XVII.

Worms storm each defence  
Of thy body, and thence  
Take forage, and plunder with power;  
In the skull of thy pride  
Poor beetles abide,  
And make it their garrison tower.

## XVIII.

Some mine underneath  
The roots of thy teeth,  
Thine ears some will mangle and gnaw,  
While others devise  
A raid through thine eyes  
To ravage the flesh from thy jaw.

## XIX.

Or wert thou one whose wont  
Was the tavern to haunt,  
And tankards right merrily drain?  
And didst thou desire  
No paradise higher  
Than the ferments of wine in thy brain?

## XX.

Did the oaths round the board  
Thee music afford,  
The shouting, the noise, and the brawl,  
Till the drunkards became  
As beasts without shame,  
And were left round the table to sprawl?

## XXI.

Or perhaps thou wert one  
All excesses to shun,  
Being temperate, virtuous, and good,  
Whose cravings were quelled,  
And in firm fetters held,  
When festivity kindled the blood.

## XXII.

Or a glutton whose greed  
Was longing to feed  
Like a dog, without manners or shame;  
Wert thou feeding the fires  
Of insatiate desires  
Till thy belly thy god became?

## XXIII.

That belly which thou  
Didst worship is now  
Filled full with brown gravel and sand;  
Thy sweet tongue has no taste,  
And thy teeth firmly braced,  
The fetters of death command.

## XXIV.

Or a lord of the land  
Do I hold in my hand,  
Whose acres were fertile and wide,  
Who was generous and good,  
And clothing and food  
To the naked and needy supplied?

## XXV.

Or wert thou wont to flay  
These under thy sway,  
Ever grinding thy peasants with rent,  
And pressing them sore,  
Arresting their store, [relent?  
Though their need should have made thee

## XXVI.

Poor men would not dare,  
With their heads bald and bare,  
Pinched, pallid, and palsied with years,  
In thy presence to stand,  
But with bonnet in hand, [ears.  
Though the frost wind were piercing their

## XXVII.

But now without fear  
Thy slave may come near,  
Nor honour nor power thou hast.  
All hail to the tomb!  
That deliverer by whom  
Thy sway has been broken at last.

## XXVIII.

Was thine office to preach?  
Didst thou warmly beseech  
Thy people in God's great name?  
Didst thou turn back again  
Those who hurried amain  
Blindfold into hell's fierce flame?

## XXIX.

Or, alas! did they share  
But a stepmother's care?  
Was God's heritage nothing to thee?  
Didst thou leave the poor flocks  
To the care of the fox,  
If their fleeces secured could be?

## XXX.

But the chief Shepherd knew  
The reward that was due  
On thy doings at last to bestow,  
And at last thou wert led  
To His presence with dread,  
To account for thine actions below.

## XXXI.

Or, when thou hadst breath,  
Did inventions of death  
And wicked designs fill thy brain?  
Didst thou put them in force,  
Without fear or remorse,  
Nor think God would judge thee again?

## XXXII.

Was a false reckless tongue  
In this cavity hung  
That would talk reputations away?  
That would stealthily sting,  
Like a venomous thing,  
Wounding hundreds of hearts every day?

## XXXIII.

That tongue has no sound,  
Death now holds it bound,  
Its slanders no longer pollute;  
Foul worms of the tomb  
Now rot in its room,  
Having eaten it down to the root.

## XXXIV.

And if these were thy ways  
To the end of thy days,  
Nor reformed nor repented thou hast,  
Thy grave must suffice  
For thy brief paradise,  
Till called up to be tried at the last.

## XXXV.

As a black ugly frog,  
Crawling out of a bog,  
So shalt thou ascend from the pit,  
To get recompense meet  
At Christ's judgment seat  
For the evils thou didst commit.

## XXXVI.

Then shall Justice in gloom  
Pronounce the dark doom  
Which shall from His presence exclude,  
And drive thee to dwell  
With the devil in hell,  
By the curse of thy God pursued.

## XXXVII.

God shall harden thy bones  
As iron or stones,  
And thy muscles as bars of brass;  
Thy flesh He' ll anneal,  
Like an anvil of steel,  
That the heat may not waste its mass.

## XXXVIII.

Or wert thou a head  
Where good thoughts were bred?  
Wert thou virtuous and godly and wise?  
Then, though naked to-day,  
Without knowledge or sway,  
Without tongue, without nostrils, or eyes.

## XXXIX.

Yet even in the grave  
Be hopeful and brave,  
Thou shalt rise when the trumpet shall  
Thy corruption will all [sound;  
Drop from thee and fall  
To the beasts of the burial mound.

## XL.

God shall deck thee with light  
And beauty as bright  
As the glorious sun of the morn;  
And those blank eyes of thine  
Shall as brilliantly shine  
As the stars that the heavens adorn.

## XLI.

Thy tongue He will soon  
Full sweetly attune,  
To praise Him with joyful new song;  
He will open thine ear  
The pæans to hear  
That are sung by the heavenly throng.

## XLII.

For when Christ shall appear  
To His faithful ones here,  
To welcome them up to the skies,  
Thou shalt hasten to meet  
The approach of His feet,  
As swift as a strong eagle flies.

## XLIII.

When thou shalt ascend,  
He will greet thee as friend,  
And show thee the love of His heart;  
Thou shalt make thine abode  
In the mansions of God.  
And ne'er from His fellowship part.

## XLIV.

Thou that hearest my song,  
Repent, lest ere long  
Health and reason forsake thee apace;  
Or death may be sent,  
And forever prevent  
Thy entering the Portals of Grace.



## NOTES.

- 4—Flash—dealradh, gleaming.  
5—The brain—eanachainn, head-contents.  
7—Beauty—maise, measured grace, symmetry.  
9—Shame on—marbhaisg, deathliness, destruction.  
11—Handful—glacaid, a grasping.  
13—Physician—leigh, a healer (leech).  
16—Fail—gun bheairt, without art.  
19—Tankards drain—pòit. Lat. potare. Eng. potation.  
24—Lord—Morair, great one (Mòr, great, and maor an officer, major, mayor.)  
25—Peasants—tuath, people, tenantry. Lat. totus, all. Also Teuton.  
32—Reckless—gun chuibhreach, unfettered, off the chain.  
37—Anvil—innean nan òrd, anvil of hammers.

# A Prayer

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The Prayer was written only a few weeks or months before the poet's death. It is his *Nunc Demittis*, an appropriate completion of his writings. Already the "plague" or fever was working havoc in his parish, and there is probably a reference to it in the concluding verses. He died of this disease in July 1768, and several of his family died with him.

## A PRAYER.

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### I.

O God of glory, great Adored,  
Above all nations mighty King;  
How dare my lips unholy sing  
Thy high and holy name, O Lord?

### II.

The highest angels made by Thee, [view!  
How weak their might! how blind their  
How short their praises of Thy due!  
How little of Thy works they see!

### III.

Before those purest eyes of Thine,  
How dim the stars of brightest sheen;  
The holiest angels are unclean  
Before Thy majesty divine.

### IV.

But, oh! wilt Thou Thyself abase  
To hear an earthly worm like me,  
Beneath Thy footstool, who can see  
But fleeting shadows of Thy face?

### V.

Lord, when I make my prayer to Thee,  
When I my sins with sorrow tell,  
And vileness into which I fell,  
Let not Thy wrath enkindled be.

## VI.

My guilt like mountains high appears,  
That crush my soul beneath their weight,  
It has me pierced with sorrows great,  
And from mine eyes brought bitter tears.

## VII.

But canst Thou save me, God of strength,  
Unless Thy justice be impaired?  
If by Thy grace my soul is spared,  
Can any be condemned at length?

## VIII.

Since justice Thou canst not efface,  
Must not destruction be my doom?  
My guilt has left Thee little room  
To show me mercy, love, or grace.

## IX.

The threatenings and the curses dread  
Found written in Thy Word, O Lord;  
My sins deserve they should be poured  
In all their terrors on my head.

## X.

Nay, though the skies grew black with  
And all Thy slumbers on me fell, [gloom,  
And Thou shouldst cast me down to hell,  
I would admit the righteous doom.

## XI.

But can that flame that cleaves each flood  
Have any power over me,  
If Christ's obedience be my plea,  
And I am sheltered by His blood?

## XII.

That blood which, shed upon the tree,  
Has Thy pure justice satisfied;  
In it, O Lord, do I confide,  
Then for its sake deliver me

## XIII.

Oh, wash me wholly, God of peace,  
In healing waters from His side;  
Life from His death shall these provide,  
And me from filthiness release.

## XIV.

My faith establish in His death,  
Give me new strength that so I may  
His gracious holy laws obey:  
Increase my love while I have breath.

## XV.

Oh, if Thou graffest me in Christ,  
In bloom shall burst my withered tree,  
Weighed down to earth its boughs shall be  
With graces as with fruits unpriced.

## XVI.

Whate'er my lot, whate'er befall,  
Make me to be contented still,  
If rich or poor, if well or ill,  
And let Thy will be done in all.

## XVII.

What grace with God's bestowing blends,  
What love He shows when He denies,  
True blessing clad in foreign guise  
Is every cross and loss He sends.

## XVIII.

I thank the God of grace who gave  
A Saviour such as this to me;  
My ransom in His death I see  
The price He paid my soul to save.

## XIX.

Beneath the load He bent Him low,  
To raise my soul to God on high;  
Each gift He sends cost many a sigh,  
'Tis purchased by a weight of woe.

## XX.

Oh, grant an earnest of Thy love,  
Which shall me from life's terrors save,  
And all the horrors of the grave,  
And raise my thoughts to heaven above.

## XXI.

Then let the billôws rise in pride,  
Let thunders through the heavens roar;  
Come earthquake, plague, or famine sore,  
Dispensing death on every side.

## XXII.

Be Thou the God of my poor soul,  
Their friendship I shall then enjoy;  
No sea can drown, no plague destroy,  
Nor fire burn but with Thy control.

## XXIII.

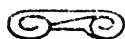
While Thou hast power in Thine arm,  
From every ill I am secure;  
As Thou, my God, shalt ne'er be poor,  
Want cannot cause my soul alarm.

## XXIV.

My hopes, desires, and fears for aye  
Shall in my God concentred dwell,  
For heaven and earth and lowest hell  
Shall my Almighty King obey.

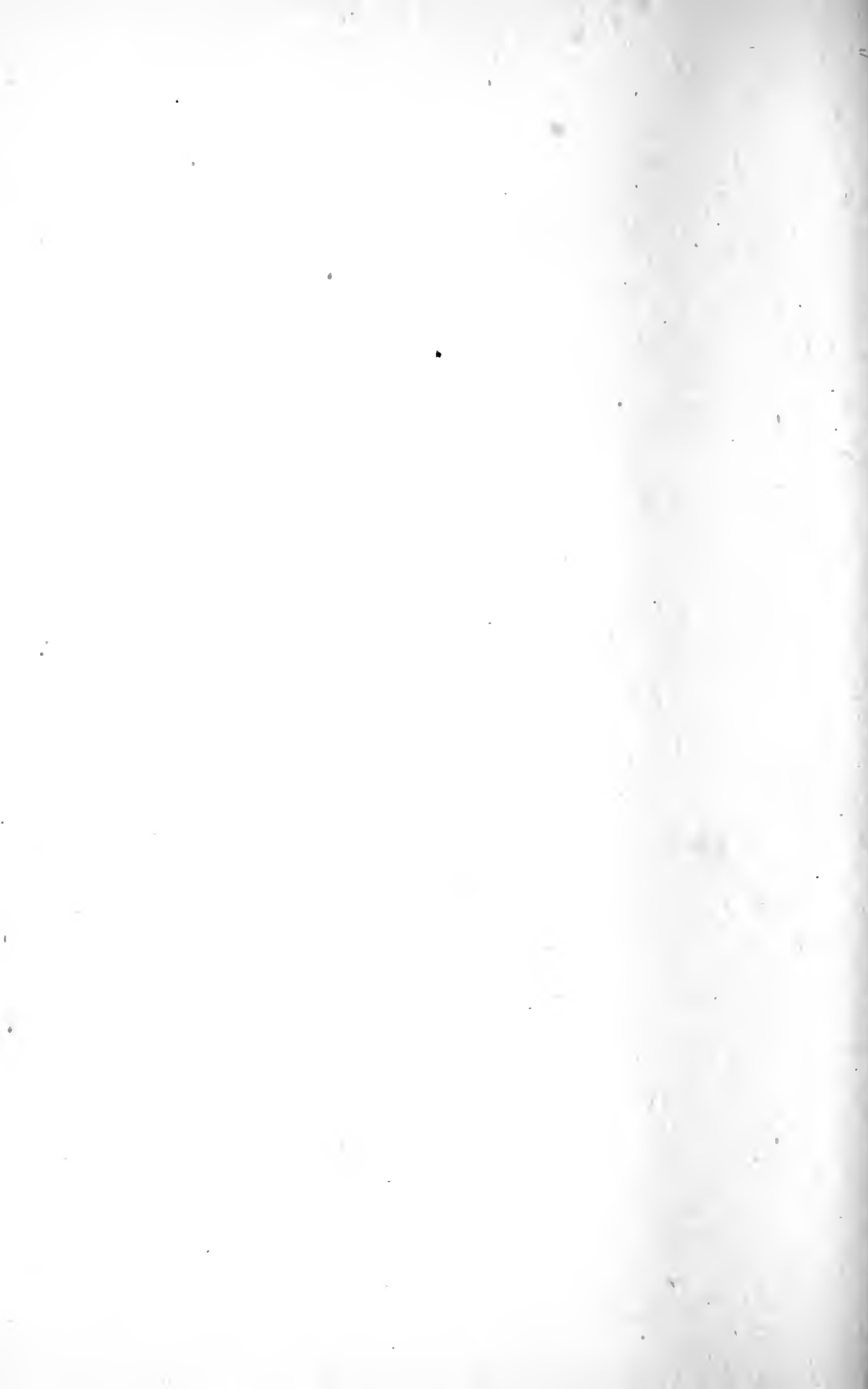
## NOTES.

- 2—How short of Thy glory their praise!  
5—Lord—Dhia nan dùl, God of the elements,  
a Gaelic phrase.  
19—Bent—chlaon a dhruim, bent His back.  
Lat. clino.  
21—Dispensing—Roinn a bhàis, dividing out  
death.





The Confessions  
... of ...  
Dugald Buchanan



# The Confessions of Dugald Buchanan

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In the notes on Buchanans' life reference has been made to the circumstances under which he wrote this private record of spiritual experiences. When read with sympathy it will be found a truly remarkable revelation of the travail of the human spirit. There is a pathetic picture of a tender-hearted little boy aghast at his own thoughtless breach of the Sabbath Law; there is a no less touching presentation of an emotional youth busy inventing religious vows and pitifully struggling to arrange covenants with God, and then there is the inspiring sight of a conscientious man waging his great spiritual battle, ending in songs of victory.

Closely examined the simple and rather naïve religion of Buchanan is found to be by no means of the type made familiar by English Puritan or Scottish Covenanter. Rather is it of that primitive kind which we find among the Columbian devotees, whose traditional piety still lingered among the Scottish mountains, solemn as their shadows and stern as their winter storms. In this sensitive man it became a strong cry *de profundis*, a lifelong penitential prayer.

# THE CONFESSIONS OF DUGALD BUCHANAN.

## PERIOD I.

### AGE UP TO 12 YEARS.

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF MY EXERCISES FROM  
MY INFANCY TILL I WAS TWELVE YEARS OF AGE.

I HAD the blessing to be born of religious parents in the year 1716, who took every care to train me up in the fear of the Lord, and early taught me my duty; especially my tender mother, who taught me to pray as soon as I could speak, following all the means used for my improvement, by her earnest and fervent addresses at the throne of grace for my conversion. She used also every imaginable precaution to keep me from the company of other children, who were let loose in the world by their parents, lest I should be tainted by their vices. Yet, all these means were not sufficient to restrain the corrupt nature that was in me. I found by experience the truth of these Scriptures, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child;" and, "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies," Prov. xxii. 15. Psal. lviii. 3.

To the best of my remembrance, when between five and six years of age, I went out one Sabbath-day without my mother's knowledge,

and for some time diverted myself foolishly; and although I returned home before my absence was observed, yet my mind was filled with terror and heavy accusations of conscience for breaking the Sabbath-day. And that night, after I had gone to bed and slept, I was greatly terrified with the following dream: I dreamed that the Lord Jesus appeared to me in great wrath, and said that he would be avenged upon me for breaking his Sabbath. After I awoke, I repented of the wickedness I had committed, and resolved to do the like no more. In consequence of his circumstance, I began to pray more frequently than before; for previous to this I did not pray, unless pressed to it by my mother. But now I began to pray without any entreaty.

About a year after this, on the 6th of Dec., 1722, it pleased the Lord to call my mother away from this life. From the time of her death I was not so well taken care of, either as to correction or instruction; and “a child left to himself bringeth his mother shame,” Prov. ch. v. The thorns that hedged in my way being now removed, I began to slight duty, and like Joash, I did well the days of Jehoiada, but when Jehoiada died, I discovered myself to be what I really was. The corrupt root began to bud, and there being none to lop off the branches, I got leave to do what was right in the sight of my own eyes.

Then the Lord began to visit me with terrible visions, dreams in the night, which greatly frightened me: I always dreamed that the day of judgment was come; that Christ appeared in the clouds to judge the world, that all people were gathered together before his throne; that he separated them into two companies the one on his right hand and the other on his left; and that I saw myself along with others, sentenced to the everlasting burnings. I always saw myself entering the flames, and so would instantly awake in great fear and trembling. These things used to set me again to my duty, at which I continued while the impressions of another world remained on my mind, but, like Pharaoh, no sooner did these thoughts abate than I also abated in my duty. And the Lord dealt with me as he did with Pharaoh, for when I began to grow remiss and thoughtless, he always visited me with another of those terrible dreams, which generally drove me again to my prayers.

At the time I dreamed these dreams, I believed them to be the strivings of the Spirit of God with me to induce me to forsake my sinful ways. These dreams continued for about two years, so frequent that scarcely a month passed by in which I had not some such dream, and subsequently became so very frequent that I did not regard them. At last, however, they

ceased, and I was no more troubled with them. This was about the ninth year of my age.

When these dreams ceased I had no rest in my mind; for one day while reading my Bible, I was particularly struck with the following Scripture: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," Gen. vi. 3. I was, as already observed, impressed with the idea that my past dreams were the strivings of the Spirit of God, and now thought that, because they had ceased, God had given me over, and would strive with me no more; that he had striven with me for a long time and that I had still resisted, till at last I had quenched his Spirit.

Thus I spent from nine years of age till I was twelve, in a kind of stupid despair, and often thinking on these words, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man."

When I reflect on the disposition of my heart at this early period of my life, I find that I was full of pride, covetousness, hatred, revenge, etc., all of which manifested themselves abundantly on the least occasion. Should I inquire whence these dispositions flowed, or who taught me them? I shall find that they were not imbibed from others. Besides, there was every possible care taken to keep me from corrupt company. Yet even at this early period of my life, before I had any access to the society of those by whom my morals or principles could

be contaminated, I found those corrupt inclinations in my nature. Again, should I inquire whence proceeded those abominable outbreaks of iniquity, which manifested themselves, particularly between the eighth and twelfth years of my age, actions which I never saw any person do at that time, nor did I hear any one speak of such, I shall find that they originated in, and proceeded solely from, myself.

Again, when I review the foregoing part of my life, I have great reason to lament that after such an education, and such an example as were set before me, I should slight them and turn such a monster of wickedness as I have done. And I have no less reason to lament the many convictions and workings of God's Spirit I quenched in those early days. But this has been my manner from my youth, I obeyed not the voice of the Lord. For my neck has been as an iron sinew and my brow brass. And I have been a transgressor from the womb.



## PERIOD II.

AGE 12 TO 24 YEARS.

CONTAINING MY EXERCISES FROM TWELVE YEARS  
OF AGE TILL I WAS TWENTY-FOUR.

WHEN about twelve years of age, I was called to a family for the purpose of teaching the children to read, for at that time I was sufficiently qualified to read the Bible. This family into which I came was singular for every species of wickedness, each one of its members exceeding the other in cursing, swearing, and other vices, with the exception of the mistress, who, I believe, feared the Lord. She was like Lot in Sodom; for every thing that looked like seriousness was ridiculed and set at nought.

I was scarcely a month in this family when I learned to speak the language of Ashdod; yea, in a short time I exceeded every one of themselves, so much so, that I could not speak without uttering oaths and imprecations: and my conscience being lulled into a sleep, I sinned without restraint, except occasionally, when I would think of death; then I would become dejected and sad, concluding that I was undone, and that to refrain from sin now was unavailing. To relieve my mind from this despondency, I would set the evil day far away, and take comfort from the distance I conceived it to be from me.

It happened, however, one Sabbath night that the mistress of the house began to exhort us, and to speak of a judgment to come. Hearing these things, like Felix, I trembled, my former fears revived, especially when she began to describe the manner of the day of judgment and of the coming of Christ: namely, that he would in a moment break out of the third heavens, attended with power and great glory; and that it was the opinion of some divines, that this would take place upon a Sabbath night and in the winter season; and that some time before He would appear there would be great thunder and lightning with much hail.

All this I heard with great attention, and my conscience gnawed me bitterly for my cursing, swearing, sabbath-breaking, and other sins. I endeavoured, however, to comfort myself in the thought that the time in which all this would happen was far distant.

But that night after we had gone to bed there came on the greatest storm of thunder, lightning, and hail, of which I have any recollection; and the windows being open, the hail poured into the room, while its walls were incessantly brightened by the vivid flashes of lightning. I trembled with apprehension that this was the beginning of sorrow, for every thing came to pass after the description the mistress had previously been giving; and the unfrequency of such storms in the winter

season, confirmed me the more in my opinion, that it was the last day indeed. My trembling increased to such a degree, as to attract the attention of my companions who were in bed with me, who inquired the cause of my uneasiness; to which I answered, that the day of judgment was come, adding, at the same time, what would we do? They mocked me for my cowardice, and said that it was not. Yet I could not believe them, for I looked every moment that Christ would appear and cry to the dead to arise.

O how happy I thought I would be if I could but lie under the ruins of the house, so that I might be hid from the face of the Judge! O the horror that seized me! And repentance I thought was too late. I remembered part of Mr Gray's sermon, in which he describes the torments of the damned, and the consternation in which they will be at the coming of Christ. O I thought if I had my life to begin again, how I should read, and pray, and keep the Sabbath! but alas! I was too late. A little after this, however, the tempest began to abate, and I was exceedingly glad for space to repent of my sins, if so there might be repentance for me; and heartily resolved against my sins, but my resolutions were soon at an end; for in less than eight days I was just what I was before.

I remained in this family five months, and increased daily in sinful practices. I remem-

ber my being, one day while here, with some other people in a boat, upon a large loch, which was at some little distance, and where to all appearance, in consequence of a great storm which arose, we were in danger of being drowned; but the Lord who is kind to the unthankful brought us safe to land, after we had despaired of our lives. "Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord," Isa. xxvi. 10.

Soon after this I came home to my father's house, with whom I lived for some time. Here I was obliged to abandon my cursing and swearing; especially when in my father's presence; but no sooner could I get out of his sight than I was as bad as before.

About this time I met with a remarkable providence which I will here relate. Having gone with some other children to bathe in a river which was at some distance from my father's house, I went too near the deep, and the sand being loose gave way under me. Finding myself sinking in the water I cried for help, which the other children not being able to give, and seeing my perilous situation, all fled for fear, except a little girl who remained on the bank of the river crying for assistance, but could herself render none. And if the Lord, who has the sea and the winds at his command, had not appeared for my de-

liverance, I would certainly have perished in the stream. But the Lord in his adorable providence caused the current of the water to drive me near the shore, when the little girl who stood all the time at the river's side, having got a hay rack laid hold of me and dragged me out of the water.

In a short time I recovered my senses, and was able to go home. Yet all these remarkable providences were never laid to heart by me; but I still continued as before. "I have guided thee though thou hast not known me."

When about fourteen years of age I went to Stirling, where I remained for some time with Mr R. D. While with him I fell sick of a fever, and death beginning to stare me in the face, all my sins came fresh into my mind. Language would fail me in describing the anguish of my soul at this time; my bodily trouble was great; yet it was as nothing when compared to the trouble of my soul. A man will sustain his infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear? I looked for no mercy from God since I had been disobedient all my days. O but the issues of sin lay heavy on my conscience! Then I prayed to the Lord that he would spare me that I might have space to repent; and began to make vows and to bind myself to serve the Lord, if he should spare me: and it pleased the Lord to grant me

deliverance from this sickness, and to bring me again from the gates of death.

But I was scarcely recovered from my sickness when I turned sick of my vows. "Nevertheless they flattered him with their mouths; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant," Psal. lxxviii. 36-37.

Not long after this I met with a book called, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*. The title page suited me very well, for I thought that was surely I. In reading this book I found that its author had been a great sinner, and yet obtained mercy. Then I said, peradventure the Lord will be merciful to me also, since mercy is offered to the chief of sinners. This encouraged me greatly to go to the Lord in prayer and confess my sins; in doing which, I found such great meltings of heart, that sometimes I would be in a flood of tears, and resolved never to forsake the Lord all my days.

As far as I remember I continued in this way of duty for three months, and took great delight in good books, to which I had ample access as well as time to peruse them, in the family in which I lived; but some books, such as *Romances* and *Play-books*, which had a very different tendency, fell into my hands: and in a little time I began to lose any relish I had for reading good books, and to spend my time

wholly in reading works of fiction and frivolous amusement, by which I became neglectful of prayer, and turned seven times worse than before. My old habits of swearing and other secret sins also revived, and I took great delight in telling idle tales to those with whom I associated, which gave me such a habit of lying, that rather than want stories of that kind I would endeavour to invent them myself, which practice ultimately led me to such an awful state that I could scarcely speak a word of truth.

I was now become openly profane, and so dreadful was the custom of swearing I had acquired, that I could not even walk the way alone without cursing those who had become the objects of my animosity, because I could get no other revenge. I remained here for two years, and notwithstanding all my unparalleled provocations, must remark the Lord's kindness to me during that period. First, in recovering me to perfect health and strength after I had been at the gates of death. And secondly, another act of divine providence towards me:—One day as I was coming up one of the streets, there was a drunken soldier going before me, whom some boys were annoying by throwing an old rag in his face. When I saw him, being ignorant of what the boys had been previously doing to him, I heedlessly took up the rag to cast it out of the way, which

he seeing, and thinking that I was one of those who had been throwing it at him, he drew his bayonet and ran after me. Having no other place of safety to betake myself to, I went into a close, and just as I was entering and he about to thrust the weapon through me, the Lord, in his adorable providence, ordered it so that he fell headlong and for some time lay in a state of insensibility, by which I was enabled to escape.

A third instance of God's providence towards me while in this place I must not omit recording here. While coming one rainy day in the month of November from Edinburgh, and having made some stay on the way, I was benighted at Falkirk. When I came to the river Carron, I rashly entered the ford without considering the great quantity of rain which had fallen during the day; but no sooner did I get into the middle of the current, than the horse I had under me began to lose his footing, and the night being exceedingly dark, I was at a loss whether I should go forward or return; upon consideration, however, I returned and crossed by the bridge which was at a little distance, and thus got home in safety. The first intelligence I received thereafter was, that a man had been drowned that night in attempting to cross by the same ford on horseback.

I went from Stirling to Edinburgh, where I remained six months with Mr S——. Here I



added to all my former wickedness, for I met with corrupted youths like myself, and we added one sin to another; and in whatever actions we were employed I was always the foremost man. Yet, even in the midst of my foolish merriment, I had great awakenings of conscience, and greatly dreaded the wrath of God; but thought it was in vain to repent. "Thou saidst there is no hope, no; for I have loved strangers and after them I will go." Jer. ii. 25.

I was now eighteen years of age, and my father would have me to make choice of some business, to which I was ever very averse, for I loved my loose way of living so well, that I could not think of any other. My friends, however, prevailed with me at last to make choice of a trade, urging that it would be a more sure way of obtaining a livelihood than any other business I could follow. I therefore made choice of the occupation of a house carpenter, and went to Kippon, where I engaged for three years with a friend of my own.

After going to Kippon, I had companions different from those with whom I had formerly been accustomed to associate myself, and, the church being near, I went every Sabbath to hear sermon.

From this time I began to be a new man, prayed twice every day, and abstained from

the grosser pollutions in which I had been formerly wallowing.

There was a glen at a short distance from my father's house whither I always resorted to pray, and here I usually spent the Sabbath afternoons in reading, praying, and singing psalms.

Good people observing my attendance on the ordinances began now to love me, and I began to love myself also when I found such inclinations in my heart, and such good doings performed by me, for I endeavoured, with all my might, to keep the comandments, and as to the outward walk, a Pharisee himself could scarcely say, "brother, let me pull this or that mote out of thine eye." My former ways were now forsaken, but my lusts not being at all mortified, but merely dammed up from running in the same channel in which they had hitherto flowed, necessarily flowed in some other channel, for it is impossible to dry the stream while the fountain is running; yet it is very possible to set a dam before a stream that will turn it into some other direction, except in the time of a violent land-flood which carries all before it: I mean strong temptations which will break all vows and resolutions made in one's own strength. Consequently there was one particular sin by which I was frequently overcome, and which, every time I was assaulted by it, I found all my strength too weak to

resist. This always prevailing destroyed my peace; I entered then into a covenant with God against this sin, binding myself with the greatest penalty, even everlasting damnation, in the event of my breaking it, thinking I would not be such a fool as to run the risk of damnation for the sake of one sin, when I had gotten, as I then thought, all the rest mortified. But the lock of my sin not being yet cut, when a temptation came, like strong Philistines, it broke all the cords by which I was tied. Such, indeed, was the strength and power of sin in me, that should hell itself in all its terrors appear before me, I would break through this hedge. Having passed the bounds of my obligation, my peace was completely destroyed. I fell into great despondency and saw that the Lord might in justice send me to hell since I broke my covenant with him, and that in conformity with the sentence of damnation I had pronounced against myself. I thought, however, afterwards, that upon repentance and a more strict observance for the future, God might forgive me, and so vowed and resolved anew against my besetting sin.

This was the manner and method of my covenanting; I vowed, in express words, before the Lord, to serve him and abstain from all breaches of any of the commandments, and particularly that commandment which I most frequently transgressed; and as I repeatedly

covenanted, I endeavoured to fulfil my engagement, watching against all outbreaks until the period to which I had limited it would expire, which was sometimes a month, and at other times two or three months, just as I might be in frame at the time of making the vow. The reason which led me to limit the vow to a particular time was this: I thought that my abstaining from sin for a certain time would wear out the habit of sinning into which I had got, and that by frequent strivings against my lusts they would at last grow weak, and then be the more easily overcome. But it always happened that my lusts were stronger at the end than at the beginning; and if I thought I had discharged my vow well (which I seldom did) I would take a little indulgence in my sin. For while my vow remained in force against me, I would be in the greatest bondage imaginable.

About this time I went to a neighbouring congregation, where the sacrament of the Lord's supper was to be administered, not to partake, for I was very unfit for such an ordinance. Here I had great awakenings of conscience by the doctrine I heard, being thereby persuaded, that notwithstanding all my reformation my state was yet wrong. Coming home at night I fell into great distress, and, no person being along with me, I remained a considerable part of the night upon the road,

sometimes crying, sometimes praying, and at other times throwing myself upon the ground, careless of the hurting of my body. At last I arrived at home wearied with the journey and the distress of my mind. I cannot distinctly remember by what means my mind was pacified after this storm, but this I know, that it did not last long, when I got some false peace, either by looking to some good I had done, or expected to do in time to come.

Shortly after this, having discorded with my master, I left him and went to Dumbarton, where I engaged for six months with another.

I was now twenty years of age when I came to Dumbarton, where I wanted the benefit of the good society I enjoyed at Kippon, and because I had not the root of the matter in me, was soon seduced by my new associates to get occasionally intoxicated, and when I would become deprived of reason would now and then utter an oath, for which, after I had become sober, I would heartily repent, and have recourse to my old habit of making vows, which were often no sooner made than broken. At last my building, which was made up of untempered mortar, fell to the ground, not all at once, but by degrees, from one step to another, till at last I found myself wholly sunk in the mire of sin, and joined with the rest of my companions in all their hellish courses.

As I was one day walking abroad in the fields, that scripture sounded a dreadful alarm in my conscience, "when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man he walketh through dry places seeking rest, but findeth none; then he saith, I will return to my house from whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first." Matt. xii. 43—45. O, how this went like a dagger to my heart! It put me in an agony to think of being forsaken by God and to become a habitation of devils. "Cursed," said I, "be the day in which I was born; nay, rather cursed be the day in which I first departed from God! O cursed be the day in which I met with these cursed companions! O sad condition! to be given over to a reprobate mind. O miserable change!" I was in that state that I could pluck my hair and tear my flesh. It is, indeed, impossible for me adequately to describe the unutterable horror with which my soul was filled. I looked upon myself as being altogether forsaken by God, and as having no more hope, but a looking for a fearful indignation that devoureth all God's enemies.

After this I for some time became so melancholy that nothing could give me any comfort.

But afterwards I began to consider what I had better do; I saw that heaven was lost; and that I had no other heaven to get if I did not take a heaven on earth. Therefore I began to cheer up my spirits, and began to take my fill of sinful enjoyment while I might have it. Then all the bonds of restraining grace were broken, and I ran on in all manner of sin with greediness. I became like a wild ass in the wilderness, and used every means to lull my conscience asleep, which, however, I could not do. Company was the only remedy I found for easing my trouble, which made me flee to it on every opportunity; and because I could not be always in company, in order to divert my mind when in private, I learned all the ballads and songs I could get; which was but a bad cure for a wounded and festered conscience. Yet, notwithstanding all these means to which I had recourse, I could find no rest.

Then I thought that if I could persuade myself there was no God that I could get some ease in my mind. But all my efforts could not free my mind of the impressions of the existence of God. It was my earnest wish that there was no God; but I could not shake off the dread of his vengeance, and in the midst of all my jollity, whilst endeavouring to shake off all thoughts of God and eternity, an irresistible impression would come across my mind that

there was a God, and an everlasting state of being, prepared for all impenitent sinners.

Being one day in an adjoining wood, and my thoughts deeply exercised about the being of God, I began to look upon the plants which were growing around me, and observed a most beautiful order in their form and structure. Having plucked some of them and examined them minutely, I saw so many branches growing from the trunk of each, and every one at a regular distance from the other; I saw also so many twigs spreading from those on either side, in so admirable and exact an order, that I could perceive no difference between one side and another. Again, I considered the various kinds of birds and beasts, and how every creature was provided with food and directed to its proper ends. Then I enquired of myself how came these to be so? But I could not tell, unless by the power and wisdom of the Creator. And thus, when I considered the works of nature and providence, my mind was in some degree settled as to the being of God and his providence towards his creatures.

Another day, while walking through the fields, I found the skull of a horse lying on the ground, bleached by the weather, so that all the seams and joinings in it were distinctly seen. Taking it up in my hands, I very minutely examined the various seams by which



one piece was joined to another, and the admirable windings and turnings that were about the ears and nostrils; I looked upon both sides of it, to see, if among so many intricacies and so many pieces joined to one another, I could perceive any difference or defect; and after I had spent a considerable time in comparing one part with another, I could not perceive the very least difference, but a wonderful order and adaptation in every part of it. I saw that nothing less than infinite wisdom could contrive such a piece of mechanism as this; and that all the men on earth could not frame such another, although they had it as a pattern; and if they could not frame the skull, how much less could they join bone to bone, and cover them with sinews, flesh, and skin; and least of all put breath into it and cause it to walk and move as it once did? Then, I concluded, surely there is a God who is infinite in wisdom and power, who is the great Creator of all things, and who ruleth everything as he pleaseth.

After that I considered man, and how he excels all other creatures, especially in his being endowed with a rational soul by which he is capable of knowing God and his works. From these and from many other considerations of a similar kind I became convinced of the existence of God; yet my mind remained unsatisfied as to how I ought to worship Him.

For it was about the time I had met with the temptation of Atheism, so that all directions afforded me from Revelation were rendered void; and this temptation, I mean that concerning the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, like the rest, followed me till I got the discovery of God in Christ, which overcame this and the other temptations.

At this time, however, I had arrived at such a height of wickedness as to sin openly and avowedly. I gloried in my wickedness, and was not content with making a boast of my own sins, but ascribed to myself the sins of others also. I never looked into my Bible, for it was a terror to me. The only books I studied were Gordon's Geographical Grammar and the History of the Kings of Scotland; and for whatever I did I could not bear reproof, for the least reproof would arm my conscience with new accusations which would put my soul in an agony. I was one day reproved for my swearing, by a very ignorant, and I believe graceless person, when I thought the terror of my conscience made me so weak as scarcely to be able to stand.

Much about his time I met with one who was reputed a learned man, and enquired of him what he thought of a future state, and also of the punishment of the damned in hell? He said there was no such thing as everlasting

punishment, and this he attempted to prove by several arguments, especially from a consideration of the goodness of God. For how could it consist with the goodness of God, he observed, to torment poor creatures through eternity, especially the heathen, who had never heard of Him? with many other such arguments. Hearing this new doctrine urged with so many arguments, I was very glad, and thought with myself that there was yet hope of coming out of hell, since it was not eternal, but only to last for a time. O sweet doctrine to such as I was, who looked for nothing but everlasting punishment, that I might now, although never so short, indulge some hope!

When I parted with this man I began to persuade others to be of my monstrous opinion by arguing with them as he did with me. But none would believe it, and indeed no wonder, for I did not fully believe it myself.

There was another thing I found in myself, although it may appear very strange how it could possibly be, and that was that I could never have full freedom in the company of wicked men, for although I was singular for wickedness myself, I could not love it in others, and frequently reproved them for their cursing, drinking, and other sins. And when anything would cross me, I would think of enlist-

ing in the army; but upon considering the way of living these men had, and how they indulged in every kind of wickedness, especially in swearing and other sinful practices, my heart could not endure to think of being all my days in such company, and thought that, if I kept myself from such, I might some time or other return.

I was greatly afraid of death, and like Cain, said every one who finds me will slay me. If it was but a little pain in the head, I would look upon it as the messenger that was to end my heaven. Something of that curse which Moses pronounced against the children of Israel followed me, "the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them. The wicked flee when no man pursueth," Lev. xxvi. 36. Prov. xxviii. 1. But it pleased the Lord that during these four melancholy years I never had one day's sickness, and I believe if I had, the terror of my mind would have distracted me. Yet, I believe it was easy for the Lord to have prevented my fears by allaying my trouble.

### PERIOD III.

AGE 24 TO 26 YEARS.

CONTAINING THE FURTHER PROGRESS OF CONVICTIONS IN MY SOUL DURING THE TWO FOLLOWING YEARS.

To divert myself I went out one day to shoot, and as I was watching some game was surprised with strong impressions that my death was not distant. And, although I was then in perfect health, I stood still as one astonished; yea confounded to think of eternity. Then I bewailed my sad condition, and said how soon has my heaven fled! O how gladly would I be a dog or any other animal but a man! For in that case death would at once put an end to all my miseries. But now all my sorrows, which would know no end, were but beginning. I began then to consider in what way I might probably die; I thought I might die like Francis Spira, for although I succeeded hitherto in concealing all my troubles, yet that my trouble might increase my agony to that height that it would be utterly impossible for me to conceal it. Still I thought if my judgment remained, come what might, that I would conceal it. This thought was however superseded by another, what if Providence, as in justice he might, would take away my judgment: as I saw in the case of others who died stupid and

senseless. In which condition I saw that I would die roaring and blaspheming.

About this time the Lord threatened to visit me with a remarkable stroke of his displeasure for my horrid iniquity, even to write my folly in legible characters on my forehead, that he who ran might read it. I saw this stroke to be threatening me for some time before, and also the justice of God in allowing it to fall upon me; for I knew that, how heavy and grievous soever it might be, I deserved it. A sense of guilt, and despairing to be heard, so closed my mouth that I could not plead with the Lord to avert it. Yet I thought that if the Lord would deliver me from my feared reproach, I never would do as I had done before. And it pleased the Lord to deliver me from this dreaded calamity, which I no sooner observed than I turned to my old ways. O the long-suffering of God towards me the chief of his sinners!

Some time after this I had business to transact in Edinburgh, where I happened to be in a company where the conversation turned upon religion, when a certain individual seeing me in a Highland dress enquired "what were my principles;" to which I replied, "that as yet I was like a sheet of clean paper, and that he might write anything he pleased upon me." "Are you indeed?" says he, "if so I will give you an advice, take good care that the devil does not scrawl something upon you, and then

you will no more be clean.” I was so confounded by this answer that I did not know which way to look; for it pierced me to the heart to think of the truth of what he had said, and which indeed the devil had already done. I was also ashamed that I had spoken so irreverently of religion, and firmly resolved never to speak in such a manner again. When I came away, this man’s answer cleaved very close to me, nor could I by any means get it out of my mind. It also continually brought my former despairing thoughts fresh upon me, and how the devil had written his own law on my heart and placed his image on all my actions.

*June 10th, 1741.* “But the month in which the wild ass was to be found was now approaching,” Jerem. ii. 24. “Hitherto shalt thou come but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. The decreed place was broken up, and bars and doors set that I could not pass,” Job xxxviii. 10, 11.

I was one Sabbath evening walking through the fields, which was my usual habit, when my sister met me and began to reprove me for profaning the Sabbath-day, saying, “what do you think will become of you, if you will die in your present condition? You will certainly perish.” At first I began to mock her for her exhortations. But she still insisted, and told me again “that without repentance I would

inevitably perish." I answered that "she need not tell me that, for that I was fully aware of it myself." "O! strange," remarked she, "do you know that you will perish? Are you in despair, or what is the matter with you?" She entreated me to apply to the blood of Christ which cleanseth from sins of a crimson dye. I told her that "I had counted his blood an unholy thing and done despite to the spirit of grace." She then inquired "if I prayed at all, and when I prayed last." I replied that "I did not bow my knee for the last four years." She then asked "if I would pray that night;" to which I answered, "No! I will never pray." Which indeed I had fully resolved. For at the period alluded to I could not as much as ask a blessing on my common mercies, nor presume to mention the glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God, in my mouth. She, however, continued entreating me to go and pray and humble myself before God, who would at last lift me up as a person condemned but rescued. O what heart condemnings! What terrible thoughts of God I had! I stood like the publican afar off, and said "God be merciful to me a sinner;" not out of mere compliment as I said before, but out of a real sense of my guilt and misery.



I had but few words in this prayer, for although I prayed I did not expect to be heard, Satan and my unbelieving heart saying that I was the greatest fool in the world to think that ever the Lord would show mercy to the like of me. However, I thought that I could not be worse than I was, for I saw it was death if I sat here, and that it would be but death should I have recourse to duty: and I further thought that if I gave over prayer again, my torments would be seven times more increased than ever, therefore I entreated the Lord to keep me from backsliding any more. The Lord at the same time instructed me with a secret and powerful conviction that my sins were pardonable, notwithstanding their heinous aggravations and that his name would be more glorified in pardoning the like of me than a less sinner.

A book called the Practice of Piety fell into my hands at this time which I liked exceedingly well, and I endeavoured to practice such directions as were prescribed in it for the discharging of my duty towards God and my neighbour. In short I now attained to a pretty good order in the discharge of my duty, for I was busy enough making a garment to cover my nakedness.

This sudden change that was come upon me made a great noise in the country, because I

was before so remarkable for my wickedness. Every one talked of it as their fancies led them. Some said, "Is Saul also among the prophets?—we have heard by many concerning this man." 1 Sam. x. 11. Acts ix. 13. And in short every one wondered at the change. But when my former companions perceived that I avoided their company, they began to expose me to the greatest contempt when they met me. Others began to slander me by taking away my good name; and my name being the only jewel that remained to me I could not think of parting with it. I thought, however, that if religion would not suffer on account of my being evil spoken of, I would have the less care as to what they might say about me, but I could not see how my good name could be taken away without reproaching religion. I then began to consider how the saints in all ages had their names cast out for the name of Christ; and also what slanders and reproaches the holy Jesus himself had suffered, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again. I also thought that if those who were now slandering my name did not know what my past manner of life had been, they, by telling only the truth, would cause my name to be much more spoken of than it was.

Then I perceived that I had begun to build my house without first sitting down to count the cost, and thought that I had better do it

now. Therefore I began to lay my account with slanders, reproaches, crosses, losses, persecution, and distress, with a determination whatever else might come, never to forsake Christ whom I had begun to follow. My acquaintances continued as formerly to expose me whenever they met me, saying, behold the Whig! Others, out of a better design as they thought, advised me to forsake the reading of books, otherwise that I would lose my judgment, and thus become useless to myself and to my friends; while others of my near relations, who were of a more heroic spirit, said, "Alas! we have lost him since he has returned after this way." Others again said that I was really mad, and what not. However, I avoided their company as much as possible, for I loved to be alone, and endured all those things as well as I could, although not so well as I have done.

*August 5, 1741.* The sacrament was celebrated in our parish, but I did not think it my duty to join in that solemn ordinance, being so very unholy and vile; yet the Lord was not a barren wilderness or a land of drought to me, for I enjoyed the benefit of the preached word, particularly in a sermon I heard from these words, Lament. iii. 40, "Let us search and try our ways, and turn again unto the Lord." This was a very comfortable sermon to me as regarded direction and consolation;

for about this time I was assaulted with the most violent temptation, but which I shall at present forbear to mention, till I come to speak of the means whereby it was effectually removed, which was about eighteen months after this.

My hopes of obtaining mercy increased daily for about six weeks, and I imagined that I had got my heart to so good an order now as to be able to regulate my thoughts according to the rules of the ten commandments, and thus began to establish my own righteousness, being ignorant of the righteousness of God. But the Lord did not suffer me to remain long under this delusion, for any good order which I conceived to be in my heart was soon wholly turned into confusion: for while at work one day in the fields, I was surprised with the most horrid temptations to blasphemy, which, were I torn to pieces, I trust in the mercy of God, I would not so much as name. And so violently did they press upon my spirit that I was almost distracted. I thought that I was a living emblem of the damned in hell blaspheming the name of God.

I went into an adjoining wood to pray, and said with Peter, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." And wondered that the earth did not immediately cleave asunder and swallow me; and, if I remember well, spoke something to the following effect: O Lord, I

have lived too long on this earth already, therefore cast me out of thy sight, and suffer me no longer to be a monument of thy mercy, since I am blaspheming thee to thy face.

This temptation continued in the same manner for five weeks, and there were two, and sometimes three, certain times a day in which it assaulted me most; and was at last so far cast down on account of it as to despair of deliverance. But it pleased the Lord to rebuke Satan, so that he left me for a season. My mind was at the same time greatly comforted by the following Scripture: "Thou hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm." Isa. xxv. 4.

After I was in some degree delivered from this temptation, I felt a great deadness and coldness in my duties, with great hardness of heart and strong desires after my former idols. All my duties were blasted to me, and I became altogether unfruitful.

Being one day more than ordinarily weighed down by the considerations of being rejected, I felt more than ordinary desire to go to some private place where I might have the liberty of pouring out my soul before the Lord; but my business being at the time very urgent and some people with me, I could not withdraw till I had dismissed them. In the meantime there

fell a great weariness on my affections; therefore I endeavoured to spend the day in ejaculations till such time as I could get an opportunity of imploring the Lord in private.

In the evening when I got myself free from all worldly hindrance, I went to prayer, where I thought the Lord brought me near to the mercy-seat. My mouth was filled with arguments, and, my bands falling off, I was wholly melted in tears.

After I had continued for some time at this duty, I thought these Scriptures came with coming sweetness and power to my mind. "Shall I bring to the birth and shall I not cause to bring forth, saith the Lord." Isa. lxvi. 9. Along with this word there came a great calm upon my soul. Before I was like the troubled sea, but now I found great serenity of mind.

I heard others talk of the new birth, and that there were great pangs in it, which led me to think that the trouble I was now in might be the pangs of the new birth; and if so how suitable was the word! It was a word in season to my weary soul. I cannot express the joy I experienced in thinking that God's promise was that I should not stay in the place of the breaking forth of children. I came away from that place more happy than if I was made emperor of the whole world. I said,

although the Lord would give me no more comfort in my duties, yet that I would live in the faith of that promise, that God never brought to the birth and then shut the womb.

Next day I went to a wood that was at a little distance, where I spent a considerable part of the day in praising God for what he had done for my soul.

In February, 1742, I was still seeking for this or that means for deliverance, but to no purpose, for I was like the door turning upon the hinges, and could never turn off the cheeks of sloth. I was altogether ignorant of Christ and his righteousness; was still hearing and reading of that grace of faith and the necessity thereof to obtain salvation; yea, without which there was no salvation to be had, and I was certain that I had never as yet believed; for I thought it was presumption to believe my sins were forgiven till I should find a certain measure of humiliation and sanctification of nature. And besides the want of these qualifications, the thoughts of the great number of the iniquities of my past life terrified me, so that I durst not believe, unless God would work a miracle to encourage me. I have wished that God would send an angel, or give me some visible manifestation from heaven, before I could venture to believe.

It likewise increased my trouble, when I saw my former companions continuing in sin, par-

ticularly those whom I had been instrumental in the hands of Satan, in teaching the way of death. I exhorted them by all the joys of heaven, and all the terrors of hell I could think of, to return from their evil ways. But all I could say seemed like idle tales to them, for they believed me not. Then I thought that God would punish me, not only for my own sins, but for other men's also, because I had led them in the ways of sin.

As I was one night in the fields praying there came a great flash of lightning, and when it was passed I looked for a clap of thunder which would crush me to pieces, which made me almost faint. However, I thought that if I died in this place I would die on my knees, pleading for mercy. It then occurred to me that many of these slavish fears came from Satan, who wished to terrify me. But after that night I was never so much troubled with these fears as before. And I thought that if God would have mercy upon me, and if ever it should be known what my sins were, and what was the exceeding riches of God's grace towards me, others would be encouraged to hope in his mercy.

I found my terrors going away and a stupid frame of soul succeeding. I could not think of coming empty-handed to Christ without



being first humbled and broken for sin, and till once I could find these in myself I could not take comfort from any promise. I then wrote a catalogue of my sins and read it every morning, but was not in the least moved. Afterwards I sought out all the threatenings which were directed against such sins, and likewise read them every morning, but still found that they had no effect upon my heart.

When one means failed I bethought me of another: I thought if I could get a cottage in a wilderness that there I would live alone, and fast every third day until the Lord would shew mercy unto me, but this I could not get.

After the Lord had suffered me to weary myself in the greatness of my way, he revealed Jesus Christ to me, who I saw was in every way suitable for my soul, but that I was in every way unsuitable for him; yet despairing to make myself more fit for him, I endeavoured to roll my soul upon him as a poor, miserable, wretched, blind, and naked sinner, without any qualification in myself to make me desirable in his sight. In this way I found the outgoings of my soul towards him, and, as I said before, I saw him to be in every way suitable for a lost and undone sinner; I found also some love kindled in my heart to him.

I had now some peace in my mind which I had never before, yet still hankered after the qualifications to be first wrought in me before I could take comfort from it.

I found mourning which I had not before for sin, and my love increased towards all good people. Yet my whole heart did not close with Christ; I had still a secret hankering after the law, and wished for a righteousness of my own. I got this relief in the month of May 1742, being in the twenty-sixth year of my age.

## PERIOD IV.

### AGE 24 TO 26 YEARS.

CONTAINING THE PROGRESS OF CONVICTION IN MY SOUL, WITH THE MANY FEARS AND DOUBTS I WAS UNDER FROM MAY 1742 TILL FEBRUARY 1743, WHEN THE LORD IN SOME MEASURE LOOSED MY BANDS AND SET ME AT LIBERTY.

I was like the man who had his eyes half-opened and saw men as trees walking; but, blessed be God, it was like the twilight of the morning and not of the evening, and so the morning star arose,—the day began to break and the shadows to flee away.

The sacrament of the Lord's supper was to be administered at Muthel on the second Sabbath of July 1742; and having a desire to be there, I set a day apart for fasting and humiliation, in order that I might be prepared for that holy ordinance; but, being ignorant of a true fast, I went about that duty in my own strength. Yet the Lord, who never left off pursuing the design of his grace in me, blasted this duty, and showed me how loathsome all my duties were in the sight of a holy God. According to the arrangement I had made, I arose very early in the morning, and having gone into the cave of a rock, I began the day's work with prayer, and spread the black roll of my iniquities before the Lord, which I had formerly written; and a humbling sight it was

to behold. I did not, however, proceed far when I began to grow very sleepy, and at last was so overcome that I could do nothing. I prayed against it, but all to no purpose. Then I took my Bible to read that I might prevail, but sleep so increased that my Bible fell out of my hands. Towards evening I came home heavy and displeased with the exercises of the day, being assured that such a fast was not acceptable to the Lord. "Is it such a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow his head like a bulrush?" Isa. lv. 5, 6.

The following day I went to Muthel, where I met with some judicious Christians, whose company was very acceptable to me, for there was no one at home who could understand my exercise. I was a little comforted by their conversation and answers; but still my soul remained in trouble, and I was afraid to join in the ordinance, as I found the unbelief of my heart so very great, and could not find so much as the least evidence of faith, love, or any other grace. And my old temptation stared me in the face.

At this time I was hearing a great noise about the work of God at Cambuslang, in consequence of which I went there, and was greatly comforted to hear the people speaking of their experiences to one another.

On the Sabbath there was a great multitude gathered together. Such a sight I never saw before. Mr Whitefield lectured from Matt. xiv., and there was an uncommon concern among the people. But although I heard great threatenings denounced against sinners of all descriptions, yet I was not in the least affected thereby, and saw that unless the Spirit of God wrought upon me, it was beyond the reach of any mortal to do it. These words came forcibly into my mind: "Behold I go forward, but he is not *there*; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold *him*: he hideth himself on the right hand that I cannot see him": Job xxiii. 8-9. I came away from this place rejoicing at the Lord's conquest in the land by making a willing people in the day of his power.

I continued in this condition from the beginning of October 1742 till the middle of December, wrestling with my own corrupt nature, and thinking that I was given up to evil affections and to a reprobate mind. At last I set some time apart to inquire into the state of my soul and to see if there was any saving change wrought in me. While meditating on these things, that scripture came into my mind, Mark viii. 24, "And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking." Then I thought I beheld some glimmering sight of my own

case, which the light of nature could never discover to me, and that He who made me, though but darkly, to see those things which were beyond the light of nature, would yet, in his own time and way, restore me to full light, that I might see everything clearly.

On the second of January, 1743, being the Sabbath on which the Lord opened my eyes to see the Mediator in all his offices, from that Scripture, 1 Cor. i. 30, "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," I beheld such a glorious sight of the Lord Jesus Christ, revealed in these words, as I will never be able to express.

I saw that Christ was not only wisdom and righteousness unto me, but that he was sanctification and redemption also. Therefore I gloried in mine infirmities, that Christ and all his offices might be magnified. I was made to see Christ to be all in all, and myself nothing.

This is the foundation of my hope, my comfort, my peace, and my safety. And now, O my soul, what think you of Christ? Is not he the fairest among ten thousand and altogether lovely? Is there anything wanting in him? Is he not all thy salvation and all thy desire? Yea, he is indeed.

That Sabbath evening, after I had spent the greater part of the day in meditating upon the fulness which is in Christ, I saw how suitable he was for my case in every way, and, as it were, called for my former unbelief, to see if it could object anything against this complete Saviour, who was now revealed unto me in the gospel; but at this time unbelief durst not appear. I have many a time called the fore-mentioned Scripture to be my charter for the heavenly inheritance, for I saw it contained more than I can write or express. O it is wide!

I had some ups and downs after this till the 6th of February, 1743, which being the Sabbath day, I went to our parish church, and the minister shewing that it was people's duty to attend the courts of God's house, in corroboration of which he cited Exod. xxv. 22, "There will I meet with thee, and there will I commune with thee from above the mercy-seat," &c. I was glad that I was in the place where God promised to meet with them. My heart warmed with love to God. When I came home my heart was greatly enlarged and my thoughts fired, but found that woeful enemy *self* to be increasing in my heart. This is the enemy that mingles water with my wine continually. It robbed God of the glory of his grace and me of the comfort which I might have enjoyed.

The same evening after going to bed I began to meditate on those things which the Lord had done for my soul, and found great composure of mind. My meditations consisted chiefly in viewing my state by nature, and the miseries which attended me while I continued therein, and also the many dangers to which I was exposed, and lastly, how *helpless* and *hopeless* I was in myself.

This time was indeed a time of love to me a vile worm. When he saw me bound in the pit, wherein there was no water, he set me free by the blood of the everlasting covenant. O boundless love! I only draw a veil over it when I begin to speak upon the subject. O my soul come and be swallowed up in admiring this love, this boundless love to thee the chief of sinners! O my soul wonder at the freeness of it! Free without any merit. O my soul, was it anything he saw in thee that made Him to love thee? and not only love thee, but take thee to himself in a marriage covenant! Be astonished O ye heavens at this love! O ye angels! behold the wonderful match. O ye saints and redeemed of the Lord, whose near and peculiar privilege it is, not only to view the match, but to be the bride, the Lamb's wife! O come and view the love that is between you and your husband!

The same night I was so much taken up in admiring the love of God in Christ, that sleep



departed from mine eyes; I never had such a night before. In the morning I went into the fields to pray and to praise God for what he had done for my soul. If there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, O what must be the joy of the sinner himself! My joy was unspeakable and full of glory, for the peace of God which passeth understanding filled my heart. After I came to the house, and had read the 103rd and 104th Psalms, I thought that I could join with the Psalmist in calling upon everything that had a being to praise the Lord. "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places. Yea, I have a goodly heritage."

I was constrained by this love to give up my soul to the Lord, who had purchased it at such a dear rate. The thoughts of returning to an ensnaring world, and a tempting devil, were very burdensome to me. I said, alas! alas! I'll be obliged to sit down again by the river of Babylon and weep, and hang my harp upon the willows with the rest of my brethren. But blessed be the name of the Lord, who hath given me this meal to encourage me in my journey.

When I was writing these things, I was sometimes so taken up in admiring that I could not write any at all, and at other times I was

all in a flood of tears, for whenever I looked on him whom I had pierced I mourned, and could not contain myself more than snow before the sun. I found great difference between this and my former legal mourning. The former was pressed by the voice and arguments, but this was free and genuine. I found a weight of love overcoming my heart, and thought that all the faculties of my soul were like the inside of a watch, all moving quick; for the words of Christ were spirit and life. John vi. 63.

The following morning I went out to meditate in the fields, my soul being filled with love to God, and meditating good matter. The wind blew indeed upon my garden, and the spices thereof were made to flow out. After prayer I began to look to those places where I was wont to seek the Lord in secret, and said, "Oh my soul look at the place where thou used to mourn for an absent God; view it now to be a Bethel, where thou art enjoying communion with him!" Again, O my soul, view this place where thou wert walking in the depths of darkness; view it now to be the place where the Sun of Righteousness, that shines in the highest firmament of glory, has dispelled the clouds, and shines into thy soul, and makes thee to walk in the light of his countenance! O my soul, view the place where thou wert once filled with distracting thoughts; view it now when these thoughts are gathered in and

placed on the everlasting object and admiration of saints and angels, even the Lord Jesus Christ! These views were unspeakable and more in number than I can write.

Sabbath evening, February 6, 1743, was a night much to be had in remembrance by me all the days of my life. And I enjoyed sweet composure of mind till Thursday night thereafter, when a veil was drawn over those things to teach me that I was to live by faith and not by sense. Satan and an evil heart of unbelief made a terrible attempt to induce me to burn everything I had written, saying, that should anyone see it, it would increase my condemnation in hell. But glory to God who rebuked the enemy and kept me from burning the special tokens of his love which he had given me. I was also helped to look to Jesus, and to expect greater things than I had as yet seen.

I enjoyed much of the Lord's presence in every duty, but, on the 22nd of February, when I was going to prayer, was, in an especial manner, filled with wonderful admiration at the freeness of Divine grace to me the vilest of his creatures.

I thought that my warfare was now in a great measure accomplished, and that my sins had got their deadly wound, so that I might take some rest, and did not need to be always watching, seeing that the enemy, to all appear-

ance, was dead. But, to my great surprise and confusion, found the sins which did formerly so easily beset me reviving again and threatening to break forth into action. This put my soul into a terrible disorder, when I thought that a jealous God was looking into my heart and seeing how I was there embracing and loving idols.

About three months after I was awakened to mind the concerns of my salvation, I happened to meet with a man who possessed a great deal of general information, and being acquainted with him, I began to ask what kind of principles those people held who are denominated Arians, Deists, and Socinians? He consequently told me some of their opinions, upon which I said that it was a wonder such profane men were allowed to dwell among Christians. He then laid down some arguments, and proposed questions in their defence which I was not able to answer. This circumstance, and at the same time reading erroneous books overturned my faith; Satan also made an attack and said, "how can you pray to Christ when you see the absurdity and inconsistency of his being God and man?" And when reading the Bible he suggested, "how can you believe that for which you have no proof or authority?" which brought my soul into sad perplexing thoughts. This was the fruit of my curiosity. I felt convinced that no person believed the

divinity of Christ or the authority of the Scriptures, etc., except ignorant people who knew no better, and who had no judgment to know things in a right way; and that the ministers themselves did not believe what they were preaching to others. By these abominable thoughts my life became a burden to me. However, I was comforted in thinking on the many oppositions which the Gospel had met with and yet that it could never be brought to nought, which was a strong argument to me that it came from God. After that I met with a book called "Some Thoughts concerning Natural and Revealed Religion, tending to shew that Christianity is indeed nearly as old as the creation; supposed to be written by my Lord P——t." By reading this book many of my doubts were removed, and the secret objections of my mind answered in a rational way. I can say that I did not read one page of this book in vain. Oh! but grace and learning when they meet in one person shine bright! Yet, after all, the temptation returned and suggested, how can these things be? Then the Lord gave me another sight of man in his fallen state and of the infinite breach which was made between God and man by reason of sin; I saw that Adam, through a sense of his guilt, could not endure a holy God speaking to him, and therefore fled from his presence, so that all correspondence between

God and man had for ever ceased without a Mediator who might lay his hands on both parties; and I saw that the Mediator behoved to be God and man in one person, for if he was God only that he could not transact with man, by reason of his justice and holiness, and that, if he was a mere man, he could not transact with God by reason of his imperfections. But the Lord, to the exceeding joy of my heart, shewed me that both these qualities were in that glorious person called "Emanuel, God with us."

Then I was taught that the Eternal Word had a body prepared for him, and so was made flesh, wherein he fulfilled the royal law which was violated by man, and suffered as Mediator to satisfy essential justice in the room of all the elect.

## PERIOD V.

AGE 27 YEARS.

CONTAINING A FURTHER ACCOUNT OF MY EXERCISES, ETC., FROM MARCH 1743 TILL THE DECEMBER FOLLOWING.

I SET apart the 26th of March, 1743, for fasting and humiliation in private before God for my unsuitable carriage since he loosed my bands, and also because I intended to go to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Glasgow; the Lord gave me a sight of my sins, and being humbled in some measure, I resolved against them for the future. I enjoyed much of the Divine presence in everything that day, and my eyes were opened to read something of my interest in Christ as being the propitiation for my sins. I found great comfort from these words: "No man cometh unto me except the Father which hath sent me; draw him." The Lord shewed me that I had come to Christ, and that by virtue of his Holy Spirit drawing me. But there came some business in the way, which to all appearance seemed likely to detain me at home, therefore I was afraid to go thither, lest the mouth of the wicked should be opened to speak evil of religion, but it pleased the Lord to order matters so, that in his providence I got full freedom to go and attend the ordinance of the Supper. I had, however, very little comfort because of the darkness and

deadness, which put me quite out of order. I stayed two days in this place after the dispensing of the ordinance, when a certain friend told me that I was rather too free in my conversation to some people about what the Lord had done for my soul, which made me afraid lest anyone should make a wrong use of what I had said, and increased the distress of my mind so much that I could scarcely walk home.

After I had considered the dark steps of providence with which I met, I could not understand their language till the event made it appear; "what I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter," John xiii. 7. Then I said, O my soul if thou canst say from experience that God had done all things well in times past, what reason hast thou to doubt of his reason in time to come? Then I saw that it was my unspeakable advantage to submit to the Lord's holy and blessed will in all things, however cross they might seem to reason. Therefore I renounced my own will in every respect.

By this submission to God's will I enjoyed a solid and unspeakable peace of mind, which took the very sting out of trials and afflictions, and made them easy and sweet, though very grievous in themselves, and quieted my spirit anent future events.

I was now about the middle stage of life, and looked back to the day in which I was



first cast upon God's care, which I am sure was done from the womb of my parents, who early dedicated me to be the Lord's, and viewed God's special and common providence towards me in every step of my life; and experience obliges me to say that the Lord hath done all things well.

I walked now in the light of God's countenance, and could read God's love to me in every providence; for these scriptures quieted my mind, "what I do, thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." "All things work together for good to them that love God." I thought it was my duty in these days of plenty to provide for the days of famine, if they should come, since I was commanded to hear for the time to come, and also to prepare for the clouds returning after the rain. I saw that it was the ordinary course of nature, that the day should succeed to the night and the night to the day; and that seed time and harvest, winter and summer, should succeed one another, till time should be no more; then I saw that my own experience, and indeed the experience of the saints in all ages, taught me to lay my account with changes in my lot, days and nights, while I was in the body.

The Lord saw it meet that I should be tried with the hidings of his face, that I might learn to live by faith as I had formerly resolved to do; and also that I might know more of my

own heart, and truly I find new deceits in it every day, "for the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?" Jer. xvii. 9.

I was left now to walk in darkness, having no light. For some time, however, I had to put the best construction upon the Lord's withdrawing himself; but after this darkness had continued a little, I began to despond and doubt of the reality of a gracious change having been wrought upon me. There was nothing of all my former experience that offered any comfort, except some of those sweet impressions which I found in my heart when first I was made willing to accept of Christ in all his offices, being sure that I had received Christ as my wisdom, who would not suffer me to be greatly deceived.

I continued in deadness and darkness for the space of two months, but after that I was enabled to pour out my soul before God in prayer, spreading out all my wants and necessities before a God in Christ.

About this time I went to Kippon, where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was being administered, and enjoyed sweet manifestations of God's love at the solemn feast. I had great delight in hearing the word preached, by which the secrets of my heart were made manifest.

On the Sabbath evening I retired to a glen whither I was wont to resort for prayer; and after reading the 17th chapter of the Gospel according to St John, found that every sentence of it had more light, life, and power than another, so that my joy was very great. I devoted also some time here in meditating on the difference there was between this and my former exercises in the same place.

Formerly, they consisted in working out a righteousness of my own, but the exercises of this day were directly contrary to them; for a better righteousness than my own was revealed unto me, upon which I cheerfully renounced my own rags, and accepted of it as being infinitely better.

After going to bed that night I thought I might sleep securely, without fearing any evil, since the Lord was at peace with me. I thought that should death come before morning, it would be very welcome. I rejoiced over the fear of death and the grave.

I came from this ordinance rejoicing in the Lord and his goodness, which I had seen and felt; but in case I should be exalted above measure, there was a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan sent to buffet me; for after I came home I found great wandering of heart in time of duty, and also blasphemous thoughts concerning God and the covenant of grace.

On account of these things I proposed to set a day apart for fasting and humiliation before God, and likewise to draw a form of a covenant in writing between God and my soul. For this end I appointed a day, a month previous to my entering on this solemn transaction, and wrestled night and day in prayer that God would fulfil his promise to me. Psal. xxv. 14. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will shew them His covenant:" And also that he would give me composure of mind when going about such an awfully important service; that He would rebuke my great enemy, Unbelief; that he would furnish me with proper experience in writing it; and above all, that he would determine my heart to accept of his covenant.

The day appointed for this was the 5th of August, 1743. I had frequent enlargement in prayer and faith in God that He would bestow everything as the work of the day might require, so that my mind was in a great measure quieted. Yet I had great weight upon my spirit about the awfulness of the approach. I read Guthrie's 'Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ and the scriptural warrant for personal covenanting with God in express words and also directions. Everything was so ordered that the world was no hinderance to me; and in order to be more retired, I went into the

cave of a rock, and as the Lord assisted me, went about this duty in the following manner.

I began the duty by singing a part of the 51st Psalm, and went to prayer, making confession of my sins by name, as far as I could remember them. Then I began to search them out one by one, according to the rule of the ten commandments, and after searching found myself of a different opinion from the young man who came to Christ and said, "all these have I kept from my youth"; for I saw that, though it should be said to me, now, "if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," I could by no means do it.

Again, I took a view of the sins which were there forbidden, and found myself guilty of breaking every one of them, either in heart or life, and which, being attended with heinous aggravations, rendered me the chief of sinners.

Now, O Lord, I do here stand before thee a law-condemned, a self-condemned sinner, owning myself to have come short of every duty which is required, and guilty of every sin that is forbidden in thy holy law; and, therefore, I will justify thy righteous judgment against me, even shouldst thou sentence me to the lowest hell; for it is my just reward.

O Lord, thou wouldst do me no wrong if this should be my everlasting habitation among

devils in the unquenchable flames. Thou art just and righteous, and thy law holy, just, and good; and in token thereof, I do, as in thy presence, subscribe with heart and hand guilty, guilty to the whole law.

DUGALD BUCHANAN.

Then I spread the black catalogue of my sins before the Lord, by the very sight of which, if my heart was not harder than the nether-millstone, it might be rent and my pride humbled in the dust. O this was a shameful, heart-rending, and soul-humbling view! O blessed Jesus, who endured the shame and despised the cross for me! O blessed Lord, who had thy heart melted like wax in thy bowels for the hardness of my heart! O blessed Jesus, who carried this load of my sins upon the cross, which to all eternity would have sunk me to the bottom of hell! I am now come to Thee, the main design of this day's fasting, which is to lay hold on God's free and gracious offer in Christ, promising to be an all-sufficient God to me, and that in a covenant way. I have read the outward call in thy word, and I find the internal work of thy Spirit determining my heart to accept of thee, and, therefore, in thy strength I proceed!

And now, O my God, I do here this day renew my baptismal engagements to renounce the devil, the world, and the flesh, and take

all things about me to witness, that I will, by thy grace assisting me, break all my covenants with death and hell. I will have no other Lords but thee; and I believe that thou wilt banish any strange god that will offer to usurp thy throne in my heart; for thou hast said that iniquity shall not have fellowship with thee in the throne of the heart.

O Lord, search in all the corners of this treacherous heart, and drive out all enemies, that thy throne may be established in the midst thereof. Set up gates and doors, and keep the keys thyself, that none may come in without thy special permission. O watch over this city, otherwise I shall watch in vain. O Lord accept of this offering, and send thy holy Spirit that he may sanctify my soul and body for a temple to thyself; and since thou hast said in thy word that it is thy will, even my sanctification, O let thy will be done.

O Lord, I appeal unto thee who art my witness, that this is the consent of my soul; all the praise of this disposition to thy Holy Spirit who hath thus determined my heart by thy grace to be wholly thine. O eternal Jehovah—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I have avouched thee this day to be the Lord my God, and I believe that thou hast avouched me to be one of thy peculiar people, to hearken to thy voice, thy statutes, and thy judgments to

do them. I take heaven and earth to witness that I desire to be saved by the method of free grace. I make all my promise in Christ's strength, and rest not in my promise to thee, but in thine to me.

O my covenanted God, all things come of thee, and of thine own have I offered unto thee this day, for I am thine by creation and redemption; therefore I plead for the sake of Christ that thou wouldst accept of this offering, and forgive anything that is amiss in this transaction. I believe that, what thou hast done for me, and in me at present, and at other times, is ratified in heaven from eternity, and stands upon an infallible foundation, more sure than the covenant of works, because it is founded upon better promises which cannot be broken. O my God, save me from taking the very least encouragement to sin because of the stability of thy covenant. O let it be a never-failing spirit of comfort unto me all the days of my life, and at the hour of death, that I may rejoice in thee as my covenanted God in Christ both in time and through all the ages of eternity. And in confirmation of this my assent and consent to all the terms of the covenant, I do subscribe it with my hand, heart, and soul; and that God is true in the record that he hath given of Christ, I set to



my seal that there is life in him and no where else.

DUGALD BUCHANAN.

At the cave of this rock,  
August 6, 1743.

Before I left this place, my closed lips were opened, and my mouth filled with the high praises of my God; my chains and fetters fell off, and I was set at liberty. O that was a sweet day unto my soul, when I sat in the cave of the rock, and the Lord proclaimed his name in Christ, and made all his goodness to pass before me.

About the beginning of March 1744, the Lord began to restore my peace as a river, after my long trouble since the first of November 1743. He shewed the holy end he had in suffering me to be tried with such temptations, and that here was "a need-be" for everything which had befallen me.

*March 14th.* When I was at morning prayer I had more than ordinary sense of my wants, and also of the difficulties of a present life; but I was wonderfully refreshed from the above scriptures, and the Lord helped me to gather all my wants both spiritual and temporal, and cast them upon himself; whereby I found my spirit as sensibly eased as if I had gotten a heavy burden cast off my body.

When I went to work in my lawful calling my spirit at the same time was rejoicing that I had got all my cares cast upon Christ as upon a faithful Creator; and while musing upon these things, the fire did burn afresh in my breast, which forced me to cry out, How great is the pleasure of religion! how sweet is it to cast all my care upon God! how good is it to believe that God careth for me! These thoughts made me work cheerfully at my lawful calling wherein I was placed.

I saw that whatever the Lord had promised to his people, he had also appointed means for obtaining. Then I saw that when I was under trouble it was my duty, as a reasonable creature, to find out the means which God hath appointed for the accomplishing of such an end, or relieving from such a burden, etc. So that when I am found in the practical use of those means which God hath appointed to further my spiritual or temporal happiness, although the thing wherein I am labouring or avoiding, should fall out contrary to that which I had designed or expected, I have real peace and comfort, especially as I had committed such a matter to the Lord, and was not negligent in the use of the means appointed by him.

*May 1, 1744.* I have been long in doubts about perfect freedom from sin, which now, in a great measure, are cleared up. At this

time the Lord kindled vehement desires in my soul after holiness of nature and conformity to the image of his dear Son. I groaned in this tabernacle, being burdened with corruption, and said, "O that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest." I can freely say, that it was not any trouble that could befall my body, or injury done to my name in this state, which made me wish to depart, but a real desire to be free from indwelling sin and corruption; but when I took a view of the universal corruption of my nature, and how deeply sin was rooted in every faculty of my soul and member of my body, my heart began to fail, and I said, how shall such a body of sin and death be destroyed, or how can I think of perfect freedom from it in another world? How can I think that my heart will be so fixed on God as not to have one wandering thought through all eternity? No, I could scarcely believe it. Sometimes I considered the almighty power of God, which could make new heavens and a new earth; then I said, why not new natures, new bodies, and new spirits also? Then the Lord convinced me of the certainty thereof, and kindled my desires more and more after the enjoyment of it. O how sweet was my meditation on the beauties of holiness!

## PERIOD VI.

AGE 27 TO 36 YEARS.

BEING A CONTINUATION OF GOD'S GRACIOUS DEALINGS WITH MY SOUL, FROM AUGUST 1745 TO DECEMBER 1750.

THE sacrament of the Lord's supper being about to be dispensed in a neighbouring congregation, I went there and got a soul-refreshing view of Christ at his own table, both in a way of correction and comfort, these scriptures being presented to my view: Ezek. vi. 9, "Because I am broken with your whorish heart, which hath departed from me." "Behold I am pressed under you as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves," Amos ii. 13; which turned my eyes to the sufferings of Jesus Christ the Son of God, whose dying love I was now commemorating, and to view my own sins as the cause of his sufferings. I beheld God's eternal Son pressed by his Father's divine fury, as a cart is pressed under sheaves, even to agony and bloody sweat.

At evening I went to secret prayer, and if ever I was sincere in anything, it was in dedicating myself to the service of God and to the honour of his name, in yielding up all my members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness; yea, I was made to believe that he accepted me in the beloved, therefore, I con-

cluded, that my mountain stood strong, and that I should never be moved; but little did I think what a storm was coming and what a journey I had to go before I was to get another meal: No less than two whole years.

Soon after this the rebellion broke out in the north, but my spirits were so stupefied during the whole time it lasted that I could not be concerned for anything, for I had a rebellion in my own breast against God. Sometimes I got my soul revived by viewing the method of grace in Christ and the promises of the new covenant. Yet, notwithstanding these short blinks, I found that grace, as to its exercise, was under a manifest decay in me, even that which remained; namely, the habit as well as the exercise was ready to die.

In the months of July and August 1745\* the Lord confirmed his love in the preaching of the word, and also when receiving the sacrament of the supper, and thereby prepared me for that dreadful storm which was coming. And though it is now over yet I tremble to relate it; and O that I could do it in such a way as that God may have all the glory, and his people get warning, though I should be exposed to the greatest shame and ignominy.

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\*In the print of 1836 this is given as 1748, but the context suggests 1745.

In the year 1745 the greater part of my relations were concerned in the rebellion, some of them fell in battle, and others suffered at Carlisle, but though the cause was bad, yet I was heartily grieved, and could not forgive those who, by their power and false witnesses, were instrumental in their death, and so, by degrees, I began to entertain resentment against them. The devil seeing me harbour revenge added fuel to the flame by representing the pleasure of being revenged on such persons, though they were entirely out of my reach, yet the meditating thereof was now become very pleasant to me. Sometimes conscience would fly in my face with these or the like Scriptures: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine, and I will repay, saith the Lord, etc. But I could not hearken either to Scripture or to reason. Nothing would satisfy me but blood, therefore I spoke favourably of that sin though contrary both to my reason and judgment.

I acknowledge to my own shame and to the glory of God's patience that he bore long before he let Satan and my own heart loose upon me. But at last I was left to myself for a season, as a just punishment for my sin, that I might know more of the desperate wickedness of my heart, and, no doubt also, that God's sovereign mercy might be more manifest in

my recovery from these devouring depths into which I had now fallen.

But I was afraid to give over public prayer in my family lest religion should suffer on that account. So I kept it up in a superficial way, and for this the devil never troubled me, he cared not though I had a name to live if I was really dead. And, O! was it not strange that any person who had experienced so much of the love and favour of God should be so far deluded as to give over private prayer—once so pleasant and comfortable?

I went where the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was dispensed but did not partake of the ordinance, believing that it would only increase my guilt.

While I was in this case I ventured once or twice to the Lord's table, but the devil set upon me afterwards in such a manner that I was like to tear myself in pieces. But some discerning Christians began to discover my hypocrisy through the mask I had put on. O the hell I carried in my bosom!

O the amazing and soul-sinking horrors which I underwent! They would even make my blood run chill in my veins, and cause a weakness to seize upon my whole body, inso-much that I could scarcely stand upon my feet. Sometimes I would toss and tumble like a wild

bull in a net, being full of the fury of the Lord, and of the rebuke of my God, and thereupon curse the day wherein I was born.

It was more than one woe that came when God departed from me. My whole case resembled the roll that was written within and without, full of lamentation, mourning, and woe.

What Christian can hear of my dismal case and not tremble? Yet this was my situation from August 1748 to July 1750. It was, is, and shall be a wonder to me in what way my soul was held in life during these last two years, or how any spark of grace was left without being drowned by the enemies' coming in like a flood upon my soul.

One thing I observe, and that is that notwithstanding all that Satan could do to stupify my conscience, it retained a quick feeling of the least sin, and my understanding remained clear, so that I was capable of drawing wholesome instructions from God's word in reference to my case, but could make no application. I could comfort others, but not myself, and then would groan under a sense of my unsanctified knowledge, saying, "Why is light given to a man whose way is hid and whom God hath hedged in?" I was afraid of nothing in the world so much as apostacy, and now my fears were come upon me, and to whom of the saints could I turn?



In June 1750 I began to search the Scriptures more carefully to see if there was any of the saints ever in the like condition, which might be a ground of hope to my soul, and then I found it written in Hosea, "I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger. I will not return to destroy Ephraim," etc. Now I began to think on the wickedness of Ephraim, and God's grace manifested in not returning to destroy him by executing the fierceness of his anger. So I thought that I would search out the iniquity of Ephraim, so far as recorded, and compare it with my own case. And I found that he counted the "great things of God's law a strange thing to him," etc. And I said, "if thou, Lord, shouldst take him by the arms, teaching him to go as a child, his first journey will be to Egypt, Assyria, or any way rather than to thee, his God;" and shall not thy soul be avenged on such a person or people as Ephraim?

A little after this, when reading that passage in Psalm ciii. 13, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." I began to think upon the pity of a father to his child. I had an only child myself, and therefore thought how much compassion I would show him if he was in distress. However, this consideration afforded me no comfort. Then Absalom's case came into my mind, and I saw that David was a man after

God's heart, and that what was written aforetime was written for my instruction that, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, I might have hope; so I considered Absalom as a rebellious son of David, full of all wickedness and abominations, which evidenced that he was a child of the devil. Therefore his father was obliged to raise an army to defend himself and conquer his rebellious son. But at the same time it is astonishing to hear these orders: "And the king commanded Joab, and Abishai, and Ittai, saying, *deal gently*, for my sake, with the young man, *even* with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom."

*July 22nd.* I got intimation that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be dispensed at Muthil, where I had several sweet communions with God, and I think that was the place in which my soul was first made to lay hold upon Jesus Christ, and was often instructed and comforted by the ministry of the word. And having many Christian acquaintances there, I resolved to go and see what judgment they would make of my case, and to lay myself open to the preaching of the word, but had no thoughts of going to the Lord's table. However, as the day was very rainy, and my body very weak, I frequently repented that I had set out, but at last I came to the place, and upon Sunday evening heard

a sermon preached by the Rev. William Gillespie, minister of Cumnock, and whom, to the praise of God's grace, I never heard in vain. The subject of his discourse was 2 Cor. iv. 8, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed," &c. The very reading of this text was a sermon to me. I wondered that I had never seen that Scripture before when searching the Bible. He shewed a great many of these grievous distresses and perplexities of the Lord's people arising from remaining corruption and the subtlety of Satan. And he likewise shewed the reasons why they were not in despair by all that the devil, the world, or the flesh could do, etc.

On my way home I sat down to rest, and in a minute's time all my doubts were dispersed, the gates of brass and iron bars of unbelief were broken in a thousand pieces, and my captive soul set at liberty. The Shepherd of Israel took my soul half-consumed out of the mouth of the lion. He took the spoil from between the teeth of the terrible, and plucked me as a fire-brand out of the burning, and before I arose my tongue was loosed to sing the high praises of my God. And at the same time Jesus Christ, the Son of Righteousness, arose upon me with healing under his wings.

But, O when I lifted up the eyes of my faith, and saw the lovely Redeemer leaping

upon the mountains, and skipping over the hills of crimson guilt and scarlet sins, I was even like one in a dream. And O his kindness was great! He did not so much as upbraid me for evils in his absence, but said, "Son be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee."

The whole gates of my soul lifted up their heads, and the everlasting doors were set open, and the king of glory came in. O stupendous miracle of grace! O astonishing and unexpected visit! But O when he came near me in the glory of his pardoning grace and mercy, proclaiming himself the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering, etc., how was my soul overwhelmed with his grace! My soul filled when he spoke. But was it any wonder that I was glad? It was rather a wonder that I did not give up the ghost with joy. Though all the mountains around me were gold and silver, and all my own, I would esteem them as dung and dross in comparison of the excellency of Christ Jesus my Lord. Was it any wonder though I was glad to see Him whom I had not seen these few years, but seldom, or as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night, and for the last two years not at all. But when my Redeemer was absent, O how was his love despised, his name reproached! His spirit vexed by my ungodly deeds. But now He is come! O He is come!

I came home the rest of my journey as one who had been raised from the dead. Yea, I could scarcely forbear to tell my joy to those whom I met by the way.

*December 13th.* As there has not been one day since the 26th of July in which I have not experienced something of the love and power of God, and for the most part of that time there has not been five minutes at one time, except when I was asleep, in which the Lord has not been either instructing or quickening and comforting me. And at this day the high tide of God's consolation has almost overwhelmed my spirit. How long I shall enjoy the manifestation of God's love in Christ is not for me to determine, but I expect to enjoy it through all the ages of eternity. Therefore I shall record the fruits and effects of this grace of God produced in my soul, and what a glorious change grace has made upon my principles and practice, and as it is with a design to glorify God, and partly that I may treasure up these things in these days of plenty, not knowing what is between me and the grave, but that I may have need to remember God from the land of Jordan, etc., so I shall, as a person who hath obtained mercy of the Lord, declare the truth as near as I can, and nothing but the truth, in these works of righteousness, which evidenceth the truth of faith to my conscience according to the written record of God.

From me thine anger's turned away,  
 And thou comfort'st my drooping soul;  
 My darkest nights Thou turns't to day,  
 My festered wounds Thou makest whole.

Thou hast redeem'd my soul from hell,  
 Thy grace my pardon did declare:  
 My cloud of guilt Thou didst dispel,  
 Which held me fast in black despair.

With Thee the fountain pure remains,  
 Of life and of salvation free;  
 And open wide Thou set'st the same,  
 To all in faith who come to Thee.

After I came home and got time to reflect upon what the Lord had done for my soul, the first thing I sought to know and examine was that which I apprehended to be the grand cause of all those miseries which came upon me these two years past. And I concluded that it was the harbouring revengeful thoughts against ——, who had injured me. Then I enquired seriously of my own heart, as in the sight of God, and said, seeing God is reconciled to thee in Christ, not imputing thy trespasses upon thee, etc., art thou cordially reconciled to thy enemies, especially to ——, not imputing their trespasses unto them? My whole heart replied to this question, yea, yea, I am; for since God is reconciled to me, even to me, I am this day reconciled to all mankind, and to those with whom I was at variance, and

wish the safety of their bodies, and earnestly pray for the salvation of their souls, without the least inward grudge, as if they had never offended me; which I took for a good mark that the grace of God was in me of a truth, when I could so freely forgive those enemies. For revenge and old quarrels are mountains above the power of nature to subdue; roots no man by his own strength can pluck up, because it is above the power of reason to subdue these thoughts when they rise, nor can any length of time weaken them. These lusts are the strongest limbs of the old man.

Now the sun shone comfortably upon my soul in every duty, the Spirit of God quickened the habits of grace and brought them forth into a lively exercise. My joy was "unspeakable and full of glory." Some time after this I fell sick, which sickness was like to be unto death, but I found the prospect of it both terrifying to nature and trying to grace, therefore I began to set my house in order and lay my account to die and not live. And here I had a very gloomy view of my conduct during the hiding of God's face, but my unspeakable mercy was that before God laid his hand upon my body, He healed my soul.

O eternity, eternity, how does the thought of it swallow up my soul! And yet I would fain live and not die. O but the grim visage of death was terrible to my nature! but to all

appearance there was no way of avoiding it. Therefore I considered myself as before God's awful tribunal, and examined by these or the like queries: "What hast thou done with all the talents with which I entrusted thee? what improvement hast thou made of them? How hast thou spent the time of youth and strength? How hast thou embraced the motions of my Spirit? What improvement hast thou made of my ordinances of preaching the word and receiving the sacraments? How hast thou employed my Sabbaths? How hast thou commanded thy family and servants to fear me? and how hast thou ordered thy conversation before them? What example hast thou given them and thy neighbours? How hast thou extended thy charity to the poor, in visiting the widow and the fatherless in their affliction and keeping thyself unspotted from the world?"

Unto all these and many more questions I was speechless, and could not answer him one of a thousand. O but the realising of eternal things is awful!

And then I beheld the Lord Jesus, not only as my Advocate and Redeemer, but as my judge. "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son. And O how sweet a consideration is it to behold a Redeemer and a Judge in one person! Was not this the Lord strengthening me upon a bed



of languishing? I could rather lie upon an iron harrow, with these considerations witnessed by the Holy Ghost to my conscience, than lie upon a bed of downs with the sting and guilt of sin.

The thoughts of leaving a loving wife and a pleasant child were very hard upon me, but at last I got over this difficulty, being enabled to act faith upon the following Scripture: "Leave thy fatherless children and I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me."

After I had got my faith fixed on this promise and command, I was as well and better satisfied than though I had an estate to leave them with coffers of gold; and having got resignation to God's will, I was willing to live or die as he pleased. But it was the good will of God to recover me to my wonted health, and I was enabled to offer to him the sacrifice of thanksgiving for delivering me from the brink of the grave.

While I was in this distress of body, my soul was daily instructed in the mystery of godliness, and the absolute necessity of faith, in order to overcome death, the devil, and the lusts of the world; and I was also made to understand something of the efficacy of faith, and the nature and tendency of it in the soul, to promote all other graces, so that for some

whole nights I have been kept waking, not so much from bodily trouble as from my soul's being wrapped up in the contemplation of God and eternal things.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was to be celebrated in a neighbouring congregation, and I had a vehement desire to be there. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God: my soul thirsteth for God, the living God, etc., Ps. xlii. and also Ps. lxiii. and lxxxiv. I quote these Scriptures because they were my meditation, and express the true desires of my soul to see the glory of God, and to feel his powerful love in Christ constraining me, for I have experienced the ordinances to be like the "house of God and the gate of heaven."

But the weakness of my body made it a question whether it was my duty or not; however, I had such a powerful desire to see a broken, wounded Christ crucified for my sins that I could go on my knees to his ordinance; yet, to do violence to my poor weak body, I thought it might be sin in the sight of the Lord who hates robbery for burnt-offering. So I spent an afternoon in secret pleading that he would shew me what was sin and what was duty.

Next morning, although very weak in body, I went to the place where the sacrament of the

Lord's Supper was to be dispensed, and had such a sense of God's presence upon my spirit, in this journey of eight miles, that he was either instructing or comforting my soul every minute, which made it very agreeable.

In the evening, after sermon was over, I retired into a secret place to give my soul a new vent, for I was full of matter. The Spirit within me constrained me. My meditation was fixed upon the following Scripture: "If a man love me, he will keep my commandments, and my Father will love him, and we will come into him, and make our abode with him." O astonishing grace! If the Son of God, the Amen and faithful witness, had not said it, who would have believed it?

Early on the Sabbath morning I awoke, and my sleep was sweet, finding my heart and affections in the same frame in which they were when I lay down, which was not usual. But this morning I awoke full of love to God, and my affections set upon things above. My very soul resembled "a field which the Lord had blessed." "My beloved spake unto me, and said, rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone," etc.

When I came to the church, there Christ manifested himself to my soul, in his dying love, in a wonderful manner. O the sumptuous

table which was covered to me in the wilderness! Behold a feast of love, unparalleled love! God the Father being pleased to bruise his own eternal Son, the Son of his love, and gave him body and blood to be food for thee, O my soul! Christ giving himself with all the benefits of his life and death! yes, and his Holy Spirit, over unto me in the feast.

Everything so crowded upon me, and shone with such beauty, that my soul was almost swallowed up.

Streams of salvation and consolation flowed in great plenty from Christ, and I got my soul sheltered in the clefts of this rock. I sat down under the shadow of this rock in a weary land, and built my faith and hope eternally upon it, despising all other foundations; therefore I believe that the gates of hell shall not prevail against me.

I came out of the church refreshed with the wine of wisdom and with the bread of God, which came down from heaven; and the delicious honey-comb of God's testimonies was a sweet morsel under my tongue. Christ conquered and I gathered the spoil; he sowed in tears, agony, and bloody sweat, and I reaped in joy and gladness. He was shamefully used, and I was honourably entertained.

I retired now to a secret place to return thanks and to praise God, because he shewed

me so much of his marvellous loving-kindness in a strange city, and I found my heart flowing out in acts of humble submission to the Lord in all his ways of dealing with me.

O Lord, I confess, to my shame, that I have been too long directing thee how to work upon my soul. I here this day submit unto thee to work upon me as thou pleasest. I yield myself up unto thee, Lord, to form me as seemeth thee good, and use what instruments thou pleasest to accomplish thy work.

O Lord do not punish me by giving me my own will, for I reckon it the greatest punishment out of hell to be at the disposal of my own passions. I doubt not, if I live any time, but fleshly ease, my honour, or some carnal consideration, would willingly retract the renunciation. And if I, through fear or pain, should yield unto them, O Lord, hear me not. O shut out my prayer in that respect. Reject my cries and tears, when contrary to thy will, and my own interest. O Lord, if thou lovest me as thy child, spare not thy rod; go through with thy work in me, and spare not the flesh for its crying.

This is the prayer of faith, hear it, and reject the prayer of sense, carnal reason, and present ease. O Lord, use the means which will effect thy work. Hear my heart, my soul, and my faith; but O reject my other

passions, though they cry mightily unto thee. I do this day enter a protest in the hand of my Advocate in heaven, at God's right hand, that they be not heard; and I promise, in the sight of God and the holy angels, and take my conscience and all about me as witnesses, that where I shall observe thy will to be, that I shall not fight nor pray against it, but submit. Save me from myself, for I am my greatest enemy.

I bless Thee, O my God in Christ, who hath enabled me to renounce myself so freely in thy sight, and for giving me such a soul-submission to thy yoke.

Now, Lord, let the dedication of myself to Thee, and my accepting of Thee as my God in Christ, and my being the subject of thy spiritual work, be like the day that is past and cannot be recalled again. Let it be ratified in heaven and I will sign it upon earth.

DUGALD BUCHANAN.

# Appendices

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Dugald Buchanan's Letters





## Two Letters by Dugald Buchanan

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The following letter from Dugald Buchanan to Mr Ramsay, factor on the confiscated estate of Strowan (Struan) in Perthshire, is here printed for the first time through the kindness of the Rev. Donald Maclean, the scholarly editor of the standard Gaelic edition of Buchanan's poems. The letter, as will be seen, sheds light on the disturbed state of the district eight years after the rebellion.

Mr Maclean says:—"Part of this letter appears in Forfeited Estates Papers, pp. 256-7-8. It now appears for the first time in full. It shows the famous poet as a lively correspondent. His vigorous defence of his friend Ramsay—a great supporter of religion and education—is justified by the contents of the MS. Forfeited Estate papers. The original is among the MS. Strowan Papers."

"SIR,

I had lately an occasion to see a copy of a letter from Mr Small, directed to Mr Moncrieffe, Secretary to the Barons of Exchqr., where I find he has misrepresented you in your Management of the Government's Affairs intrusted to you in this country. Believe me, Sir, I could scarce believe my eyes when I read such gross Falsehoods in that Letter, and cannot but wonder how

he could have the assurance to assert such things of a man of honour, especially since he knew how easily such Falsehoods might be detected. However, in the midst of so many Falsehoods I find one Truth that he has said, viz., that numbers of the tenants are reduced to misery by their former practices, and as they are obliged to make restitution. But what is most surprising is that he thinks that ye, as Factor, should be always at hand to tutor and nurse them like so many infants; but to be free from this trouble he supposes was your scheme of turning out all the old inhabitants at once; which was only a mere chimera quite without foundation. I can say this thus far that I have often heard you say that ye intended to deal with the thieves of Rannoch as Joshua did with the Canaanites, *To drive them out by little and little*. Now, Sir, ye may well remember that of upwards of fifty reputed villains ye proposed to turn out five to be examples and a terror to the rest, and of those five that ye have turn'd out Mr Small has taken back three of them to his farm and other services. In his Letter he says, if he had not been in the country in your absence to supply the necessitys of the Tenants and risquing his small credit (as he calls it) to get them meal, etc., that many of them would have turned out actual outlaws this very year, being either reduced to starve or steal. If Mr Small has risq'd his credit in getting meal to any in this country it has been allenarly for those knaves that he has taken into his protection, but I suppose, Sir, that ye are not to follow his example in this, to risque your credit in getting meal for every bankrupt rogue that pays you rent. I have diligently enquired where I could find he had given Tickets to any of the Tenants since I read the copy of his Letter, but could find none, but those above named, so that this part of his Letter is false and groundless.

Another part of his letter is in representing the country in the greatest confusion by reason of your not being oftener in it. He does not condescend upon particulars,

nor could he do it. That the country is in confusion is an untruth, for the oldest men in the country never saw it in such order, nor was there ever such a prospect of the continuance of order as we just now have. In or about the year 1700, when Fonab Glendaruel and several other gentlemen were employed by the Government to curb the thieving of the Highlanders, they indeed did wonders and rendered the countrys fully as honest as they are at this day, but then there was no care taken of the then rising generation (who are now the only standing villains that we have) to instruct them in the Principles of Religion, Loyalty and Industry. Whereas those villains that are now restrained by the Laws, have their children in all those amiable virtues which has a goodly prospect to posterity. I believe that on all the Forfeited Estates there is no such care taken in the instruction of Youth as in Rannoch, nor such countenance shown to Industry of every kind; as we have within these three years got seven new erected schools upon the estate of Strowan and Lochgarry, so we have this winter upwards of three hundred and fifty boys and girls instructed not only to Read, but some of them to spin and knit stockings. I wrote the state of the schools to you last week as far as I then knew, and can only add that my own school, which was then thirty-six, is now advanced to fifty-two, and this day my wife has begun her spinners, which are in number five, and expects that they'll at least continue two months to attend. I have not been able to visit the schools at Glengarry and Glenerechy as ye ordered me, but by accounts from those parts I hear there are more scholars this year than was last year. The school at Carrie is not gathered so well as ye expected, and the reason is the Bridge is not repaired upon the Burn. And because there was a child lost when the former Bridge was taken away, all them on this side of the burn will not send their children to school till it be sufficiently made up. It is allenarly owing to Mr Small that this is not

done before now, for he would not give a stick out of the wood to lay upon it, but oblidged the Tenants to take Allar or Birch, or what else they could get, or want, and I am far mistaken if some of the wood does not go for worse purposes than to serve such a publick good.

This, Sir, is the confused state of the country as represented by Mr Small, and I cannot but be sorry that the Honble. Barons should believe the false Report of an immoral man when a hundred honest men can attest the contrary. Would they to satisfy themselves send a judicious person who would act impartially, and enquire if there is any alteration to the better, or if the country be in confusion by the Factor's absence. I dare say they should have a most satisfactory answer. How far Mr Small's countenancing rogues may be approven of by the Barons is what I cannot tell, but this I know, that this very method has been attended with very bad consequences in times past, for it is exactly the old Highland way, when one Master turn'd out a rogue another protected him. It is true these villains do some service to those that protect them, but, still, the Publick are sufferers by those services. He says in his Letter that severals have applied to him for assistance, as they had no master, and, in fact, I know of none whose application (if they applied at all) has been successful, except it be one John Breck M'Donald, whom he brought out of the Tolbooth of Perth upon bail, and has since given all the assistance he can in a Law suit he has depending at Edinburgh. Now, Sir, it is clear that this M'Donald is among the greatest villains that are in the whole country.

I find also in his Letter that he would fain make a handle of you making Breackechie in managing the estate of Clunie. Whatever construction the Barons may put upon this, I know from what ye told myself that your design in this was laudable, viz., that your making use of him, at the time ye did, was to serve both the Tenants

and the Government. For ye told me Breackechie's influence upon the Clan brought them to a submission that no stranger would do without a military Force; and this was both saving the Government expenses and attaching the minds of the Tenants to the Government. To conclude, Sir, the screen by which Mr Small would hide his intentions is so thin that I hope the Barons will easily see thro' it, and that it need give you but very little trouble. If integrity and truth may be trusted in a time of need I am sure that Mr Small's lies cannot hurt you.

I am, Sir,

Your Most Humble Servant,

DUGALD BUCHANAN.

DRUMCHASTLE, 27 Novr., 1753.

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This second letter from Buchanan's pen is very different in matter and tone, and it shows quite another phase of his many-sided character. It was published in "Man's Twofold State," in 1853, probably reproduced from the Rev. Dr John Erskine's volume of "letters comforting those bereaved of children or friends," published shortly after Buchanan's death.

Dr Erskine was an Edinburgh clergyman, and is said to have known Buchanan long and intimately. His testimony is that he possessed all the knowledge which could be acquired by perusing the best English books in divinity, natural philosophy, history, and poetry." He added that "in a letter which

Buchanan wrote, exposing the absurdity of the instruction from the committee for managing the Royal Bounty that their missionaries should at least preach one half of the day in English," there were "strokes of humour of which a Swift or a Sterne needed not to have been ashamed."

We have already seen that Buchanan could write a trenchant epistle, but after all, the sympathetic and contemplative vein of the following letter seems to represent more truly the real character of the man.

The date, it will be seen, is February 1768. In the brief period of four months he was to prove by personal experience the reality of the world invisible.

"Kinloch Rannoch, 5th February, 1768.

"I received a letter from Mr Caw, acquainting me of the death of your daughter, and how wonderfully Mrs Wallace has been supported under this severe trial of her faith and patience. 'This is the doing of the Lord,' who commonly stays His rough wind in the day of His east wind. What an alleviating circumstance in your trial is it that ye have no reason to mourn as those who have no hope. How many live to see their children and relations cut off in the prime of life, by diseases, the just effects of vice and intemperance! How many darts and thorns must pierce their hearts! What additional gall and wormwood is mixed in their cup, to which the parents of pious children are strangers! Patience under God's afflicting hand, and resignation to His will, are the chief means whereby in the day of affliction we can glorify God. Imagine your dear departed child adopting the language of her Re-

deemer. 'If ye loved me ye would rejoice, because I am gone to the Father.' How backward are our hearts to this duty of rejoicing! Our passions often get the better of our understandings as well as of our faith. Our memories, treacherous enough on other occasions, here are ever faithful, and cruelly muster up, in a long succession, all the amiable qualities of our departed friends, and thus tear open our wounds to bleed afresh. Imagination is set to work, and stuffs up their empty garments in their former shape, when we miss them at bed or table. It is truly surprising, when our judgment is fully convinced that God's paths are not only truth but mercy to such as fear Him, and when our faith reads designs of love in our trials, that this has so little influence in silencing the murmurs of our souls. Yet, surely, it is pleasing to God, who knows our frame, and remembers we are dust, to look upon us, surrounded with all the frailties inseparable from human nature in its present state, lying low in the dust, and weeping with a feeling smart of our pain and loss; and at the same time acquiescing in His whole disposal of us and ours, as best for us; and from the inmost recesses of our soul, striving to imitate Christ's prayer, 'Not my will, but thine, be done.'

"It were well if, instead of poring upon our wounds, and refusing to be comforted, our faith traced out our friends in the regions of immortality, where (to use Milton's phrase) they walk with God, high in salvation and the climes of bliss. Though the partition which now divides us from the eternal world is otherwise impenetrable, revelation informs us that there the righteous are in a state of inconceivable happiness. As to what that happiness consists in, and the various employments, we are left much in the dark. as perhaps not fit to be revealed in this state. Yet surely it is pardonable to cast some conjectures over this wall that for a while divides us from our friends, as it is impossible to confine our

active souls under the canopy of our moon and stars. Now, except where revelation gives here and there a hint of the heavenly state, analogy is our best guide into these scenes that eye hath not seen.

“ I remember to have seen long ago a book of Dr Watts, called ‘ Death and Heaven,’ where he has happily indulged his fancy in assigning various employments for the blessed. He thinks, too, that there may be some solemn stated periods of worship in heaven, beyond what is their common service, either to commemorate some of the past transactions of the Godhead, or to celebrate some new discovery of God. And truly, considering the infinite nature of God, His glorious acts of creation and redemption. and the finite capacity of the highest orders of creatures, there must be new discoveries of God made to the blessed through all eternity, as they can only receive such discoveries in succession. Perhaps some such manifestation has been lately made, unknown till now in heaven itself by finite minds. A new song has been composed on this occasion, by Michael, Gabriel, Moses, David, or some other masterly hand, to celebrate this discovery; and the concert was incomplete till a messenger was despatched for your dear child, to assist in singing the chorus; as her sweet, soft melodious voice was so well tuned before to the songs of Zion.

“ Our Lord once entered Jerusalem with a grand retinue, and must have an ass to ride on, that he might fulfil an ancient prophecy. A messenger was despatched for the ass, and, if the owners quarrelled him, had order to tell them ‘ that the Lord had need of him.’ If your heart grudge or quarrel that your child is so soon loosed from you, saying, Why was my dear child so suddenly snatched from me in the bloom of youth, when I expected she should be the comfort of my old age, and soothe my pains and distresses? Why, the answer stands on record for you, ‘ The Lord hath need of her.’ He had need of



more virgins in his train; and your dear child was pitched upon. Therefore rejoice in her honour and happiness. Our Lord has gone to Heaven to prepare mansions for His people, and He sends His spirit to prepare His people for these mansions. And after they have served an apprenticeship to their future employment, that they may be fit to act agreeably to the great end of their calling, and fill their thrones to the honour of that God who hath called them to glory, He then crowns them with endless happiness. Some have longer time of probation than others. The great dresser of God's garden knows best when to transplant his fruit-bearing trees. In his perfect wisdom we ought always to acquiesce.

“ If I were to reason from analogy, I might ask Mrs Wallace when she was with child of her departed daughter, if she desired to keep her in that close union with herself any longer than her full time was come; that is when the child was perfectly formed for this world, and fit to exercise its senses upon the various objects that his world affords. Nay, did she not wish for the happy minute of separation, though she knew the pangs and throes of child-bearing? And why should you or Mrs Wallace, who rejoiced at her first birth, mourn at her being admitted into the number of the spirits of the just made perfect, when it is certain that many who rejoiced with you at her birth hailed her arrival on the coast of bliss? Among those who rejoiced with you at her first birth, and saluted her on the heavenly shore, we may safely mention Mr and Mrs Hogg, and others of your pious relations and neighbours, who have got crowns on their heads, since her first birth.

“ But I see that his subject would lead me beyond the bounds of a letter. I have only to add that I sympathise with you and your whole family in your loss, which is your daughter's gain and glory. That the Lord may bless your remaining children, preserve them to be the comfort of your old age, form them to be vessels of honour meet for

the Master's use, and fill your own soul with those consolations which flow neither from wife, child, nor friend, nor anything this world can give, or take away, is the sincere prayer of, Sir, Yours faithfully in Christ,

“ DUGALD BUCHANAN.”



### **CORRIGENDA.**

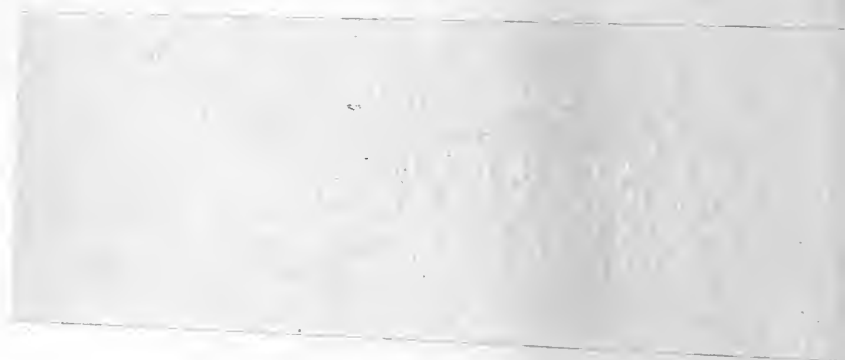
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Page 19, line 13, read 1751.

Page 41, verse 3, line 4, read—to it.

Page 78, last line, comma after “Word.”

Page 129, line 20—Columban.



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